

# District School Journal,

FOR THE STATE OF NEW-YORK.

PROMOTE, AS AN OBJECT OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE, INSTITUTIONS FOR THE GENERAL DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE.—Washington.

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## STATE OF N. YORK—SECRETARY'S OFFICE.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS, }  
Albany, June 1, 1842.

It having been represented to this Department, that great delays exist in many of the school districts, in the expenditure of the Library money, in the purchase of suitable books; in consequence of which the districts are not only deprived for a considerable period, of the benefits which would result from the use of the books, but frequently forfeit their share of the Library money for the succeeding year, through the neglect of the Trustees to expend the money in their hands within the time prescribed by law: and it being of great importance that the Library money should be expended at the earliest practicable period:—

It is therefore, hereby ordered, That the Trustees of the several school districts in this state, expend the Library money, apportioned and paid to them for the use of their respective districts, for the present year, in the purchase of suitable books, on or before the first day of September next. And that in each year succeeding the present one, while this order remains unrescinded, the Library money aforesaid, which may be received by the Trustees of the several districts, be so expended on or before the first day of July.

The Deputy Superintendents of the several counties are hereby directed to report to this Department, the names of all Trustees of districts, within their respective jurisdictions, who shall neglect to comply with this requisition.

S. YOUNG, Sup't Com. Schools.

## COMMON SCHOOLS.

### STATE CONVENTION OF DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENTS.

*Proceedings of the Convention of the Deputy Superintendents of the several Counties in this State, held at Utica, on the 4th, 5th and 6th of May, 1842.*

[Reported for the District School Journal.]

Wednesday, May 4, 9 A. M.

Mr. STEPHEN MOULTON, of Oneida, called to order, and on his motion,

HENRY E. ROCHESTER, of Monroe, was called to preside temporarily, and

HALSEY R. WING, of Warren, appointed Secretary, pro tem.

On calling the roll of Deputies, forty-nine answered to their names, as follows:

Albany—Royal Shaw.	Oneida—Harold H. Pope,
Allegany—L. G. Moxon.	Stephen Moulton.
Broom—Geo. T. Frazier.	Onondaga—Alanson Edwards,
Cayuga—John B. Bowen.	Chauncey Goodrich.
Chemung—Nathan Tidd.	Orleans—Edwin K. Reynolds.
Columbia—David G. Woodin.	Ontario—A. T. Hopkins.
Delaware—R. S. Hughton.	Orange—J. C. Tooker.
Dutchess—D. McFarland.	Oswego—O. P. Tallmadge,
Dutchess—A. S. Clement.	O. W. Randall.
Essex—E. J. Shumway.	Otsego—Jabez D. Hammond,
Franklin—D. H. Stevens.	Lewis R. Palmer.
Fulton—F. B. Sprague.	Rensselaer—Z. P. Burdick.
Genesee—David May.	Schenectady—Alex'r Fonda.
Greene—C. C. W. Cleveland.	Schoharie—Ezra Smith.
Hamilton—Bethuel Holcomb.	St. Lawrence—J. Hopkins.
Herkimer—J. Henry, jr.	Steuben—Ralph K. Finch.
King—T. P. King.	Tioga—George Williams.
Livingston—E. Patchin.	Tompkins—J. S. Denman.
Madison—E. Manchester,	Warren—Halsey R. Wing.
T. Barlow.	Washington—William Wright,
Monroe—H. E. Rochester.	Albert Wright.
Montgomery—Walter Hough.	Wayne—Philo D. Green.
Niagara—Moses H. Fitts.	Wyoming—Tristram Little.
	Yates—H. C. Wheeler.

The Rev. WILLIAM GALLAUDET, of Connecticut, being present, at the request of the Convention, opened the proceedings with prayer.

On motion of Mr. MOULTON, of Oneida, a committee was appointed by the Chair, consisting of Messrs. MOULTON, PATCHIN, of Livingston, and TOOKER, of Orange, to report the names of officers of the Convention.

The committee, after retiring, recommended through their chairman, the following appointments, which were unanimously confirmed by the Convention.

For President,

JABEZ D. HAMMOND, of Otsego.

For Vice-Presidents,

THEODORE F. KING, of Kings,

HENRY C. WHEELER, of Yates.

For Secretaries,

ALEXANDER FONDA, of Schenectady,

DAVID NAY, of Genesee.

President HAMMOND, on taking the Chair, addressed the Convention, in substance, as follows:

Though fully aware that considerations of respect for years, perhaps rather than any peculiar qualifications of his own, had induced his selection for the duties of the Chair, he was nevertheless grateful for the distinction, and he should endeavor at least, not to discredit the choice of the convention, in the discharge of the functions of its presiding officer. It could hardly be necessary for him to dwell upon the importance of the occasion which had called the meeting together from all parts of the state. He presumed every gentleman present came there fully impressed with its immense importance. That this country owed much, very much to the general diffusion of knowledge, was not more strictly true, than that the only means to accomplish that end was the proper management and regulation of common schools. It was not perhaps too much to say that the civil institutions of this country were in a great measure to be attributed to the common school system of New England, introduced and established by the Pilgrims. Since the commencement of the present century, the attention of statesmen, and even monarchies of Europe had been directed to this great subject of enlightening the common mind. No doubt the governing motive of those engaged in it had been philanthropy and benevolence; but it was not improbable that these monarchs and statesmen may have found out that in addition to what had hitherto been considered the strength of a nation, physical power and money, there is a certain aggregate of knowledge necessary to cement and crown the whole. Hence, no doubt, the comparatively recent efforts, on the part of statesmen of the old world, to add to the mass of mind within their respective dominions. And it was a fact somewhat mortifying to us as Americans, that in one government of Europe—and that the most despotic of monarchies—[he alluded to Prussia]—the common school system had been carried to a higher degree of perfection than here. If it were important to add to the strength and power of a nation by these means in the old world, how much more important in this country, where the sovereignty, instead of being vested in a single individual, resides in the majority of the people! How can we expect to preserve our institutions, if the mass of the people, the sovereign majority, be not enlightened? However disposed the mass may be to maintain a good government, how is it possible without the intelligence on their part to perceive and to pursue the policy best suited to accomplish the great end in view?

Those who had for several years looked into the operation of our common school system, had with great pain observed, that if our schools had not retrograded, they had at least remained stationary. And yet, the state had provided liberally—as liberally perhaps as the proper encouragement to individual effort required at its hands. The necessary organization existed. Officers were regularly appointed to carry out the details of the system. The laws in reference to it were generally judicious. And why was it that this institution, conceded to be of more importance than any other, had remained stationary, if not retrograded! Surely it was not owing—and he was happy to say it—to any remissness on the part of those who had, from time to time, discharged the duties of State Superintendent. Gideon Hawley, the first superintendent of common schools, who may be said to have perfected the system in a great degree—an excellent, exceedingly judicious, modest, retiring man—brought all the powers of his strong and well-informed mind to the task. Next to him, John Van Ness Yates, a man of vigorous intellect and ready resources, gave to this subject his best energies and efforts, and not without good results. Next came Azariah C. Flagg, a clear headed, intelligent man, who although fresh from the theatre of party conflicts, in which he bore no inconsiderable part, yet as respects this subject of common schools, devoted himself with assiduity and indefatigable energy to the preservation and promotion of the institution. Next to him John A. Dix, a man of fine literary taste, and varied acquisitions, to whom the subject was congenial and the labor light. He too made it his ambition to mature and perfect the system of common school instruction. He was followed by John C. Spencer, a man of eminent talents, and untiring effort, and who, during the time that he discharged the duties of superintendent, seemed more than any of his predecessors, to have devoted his great mental and physical energies to the perfection of the system. We have now, the present superintendent, of whom, because he was the present superintendent, he should merely remark, that he had known Col. Young from his entrance into public life—that the common school system had been a favorite subject of attention with him—and that his ardent and best efforts had been directed to its improvement. He would continue to say also, that to talents of the most exalted character, he

added a fitness and capacity for usefulness in the department which he so ably filled, unsurpassed by any other man in the state. If therefore, the system has stood still, or retrograded, the reason for it must be sought not in any want of capacity or attention at the helm, but rather to the fact that under the former regulations, it was next to impossible for the state superintendent to be informed specifically of the defects in the management of the system, and where the defects existed.

As a last resort, the system under which this Convention had assembled, was adopted—the system of Deputy Superintendents of the several counties. If this failed in giving impetus to the successful progress and influence of common schools, the hopes of the philanthropist would be in a great degree defeated. Deputy Superintendents, (and it was right that it should be so,) had very little power, if any. Their duties were advisory and recommendatory. Their province was to endeavor, by suasion, by example, by advice, by visitations, to improve the common schools. And the object of the existing law on this subject, was that every district in the state, however secluded or remote should be reached, and had the working of the system looked into down to its farthest extremities—to the end that defects might be ascertained and reported, and the correction, if possible, applied. Another high advantage of the system, was that any improvement in the mode of teaching or government in any portion of the state, whether in a log school house in the county of Cattaraugus, or in the remote part of the wilds of Hamilton, might be, and should be, communicated by the deputies to the State Superintendent, and by him spread all over the state, through its ten thousand neighborhoods. Another object was to get up an interest—a healthy public sentiment in relation to it in this country, as it should be in all free countries. Public opinion here, as it should, controls every thing—and if in each school district in the state, through the efforts and influence of its Deputy Superintendents, this desirable state of public opinion can be produced, the aggregate results must be what was designed. If each of us in the several school districts in the counties in which we are located, can ignite a single spark, how soon and how brilliantly will these ten thousand fires illuminate the empire state.

Mr. H. adverted to the fact that the Convention was honored with the attendance of gentlemen of high character and eminent friends of the cause of education—some of whom had been personally engaged in promoting its advancement—gentlemen of this and other states. The State Superintendent was also in attendance. Their presence and co-operation could not but cheer us on in our efforts in the great cause. We had met, not for the purpose of display—to figure in the newspapers as speakers or otherwise—but to confer together in reference to our experience of the working of the system, and as to the best mode of rendering ourselves and our services acceptable to the people with whom we mingle, and useful to the great cause. Much, very much, might depend on the wisdom of the deliberation of the Convention, and the action which might be had. In view of these considerations, the aim of the Convention should be to unite cordially in collecting and comparing information which they had got by experience, and to adopt such system of action as should be found best calculated to advance the great cause of popular education. So far as regards himself individually, his best efforts should be directed, in his capacity of presiding officer, and in every capacity in which he might be engaged in this work, to promote the common object.

On motion of Mr. ROCHESTER, of Monroe, a committee was appointed by the chair, of one from each senate district, to present from time to time, subjects for the consideration of the Convention—to be called the

Committee on Business—Messrs. King, Tooker, Burdick, A. Wright, Pope, Williams, Hopkins and Parker.

On motion, ordered, that FRANCIS DWIGHT be, and he is hereby admitted as an acting and voting member of this Convention.

Mr. KING, from the Committee on Business, reported the following rules and regulations, which were adopted, after an unsuccessful motion by Mr. WING, to restrict each member to ten minutes.

1. The business of each day shall be opened with prayer.
2. Committees shall be appointed by the presiding officer, unless the Convention otherwise direct.
3. The Business Committee shall report all business to the Convention, but after the acceptance of their report, any member may present any resolution for the action of the Convention.
4. All resolutions shall be submitted in writing, to the President, and at his discretion, submitted either to the Business Committee, or laid directly before the Convention.
5. No member shall speak more than fifteen minutes at any one time, or more than twice on the same subject, without unanimous consent.
6. The morning session shall commence at 9 and close at half past 12 o'clock. The afternoon session shall commence at 2 and close at 6 o'clock.



Mr. WING presented the following list of gentlemen in attendance on the Convention, and moved that they be admitted to seats as honorary members, which was agreed to.

Hon. Samuel Young,	Hon. Hiram Barber,
Hon. Horace Mann, Mass.	Rev. Loren L. Knox,
Prof. Alonzo Potter, D. D.	J. Washington Taylor,
Gen. John A. Dix,	Jas. Witherington,
Geo. B. Emerson, Mass.	D. W. C. Van Slyck,
Rev. Wm. Gallaudet, Ct.	Geor. R. Perkins.

The President here stated that Mr. Randall, Mr. Dwight and himself had united in addressing a letter of invitation to all the former State Superintendents, to attend and participate in the deliberations of the Convention. The letters of Gen. Dix, and the Hon. JOHN C. SPENCER, in reply to such invitation, he would take the liberty to read, and he read as follows:

Albany, 30th April, 1842.

GENTLEMEN—Your favor of the 20th inst. was received as I was about leaving the city for a few days, or I should have given it an earlier answer.

It would give me sincere pleasure, if it were in my power, to attend the contemplated meeting of the Deputy Superintendents of common schools at Utica, and to take part in the proceedings of the Convention. I have an engagement at that city, which will detain me there during a few of the first days of May, but I fear I shall be so constantly occupied, that I shall be unable to do more than to attend the Convention for a few moments. As all that concerns the welfare of the common schools of the state, I take a deep interest. I feel the importance of their connection with the elevation of the intellectual character of the state, and the perpetuity of our system of free government, the more strongly, perhaps, from the opportunities I have had in past years of looking into the details of their organization, and their practical operation. I feel justified by my own observation and experience, in regarding them as the best conservators of popular institutions. If I am right, there can be no higher duty, or more honorable occupation, than that of cherishing the system, extending its usefulness, perfecting its details, and ministering to its superintendence, fidelity and devotion in the officers concerned in the management of the internal affairs of the districts, intellectual power, and moral worth in the teachers, are all necessary to make it what in justice to the people it should be. Nor will all these requisites be sufficient, unless a liberal public opinion shall accompany the efforts of those who are immediately connected with it, to cheer and encourage them in their labors. Though I have been for several years engaged in other occupations, I believe I am not mistaken in the opinion, that the schools are in a state of progressive improvement; particularly as respects the system of instruction. That the contemplated Convention may infuse new zeal and energy into the exertions of all connected with them, and lead to a more extensive and rapid progress in all that concerns their prosperity, is the sincere wish of

Gentlemen, your m. obd. serv't.

JOHN A. DIX.

Messrs. Jabez D. Hammond, Samuel S. Randall, and Francis Dwight.

Washington, April 24, 1842.

GENTLEMEN—I feel very much flattered by the invitation you gave me in your letter of the 20th instant, to attend the Convention of the Deputy Superintendents of common schools of the State of New-York, at Utica, on the first Wednesday of May next, and by the very complimentary terms in which you are pleased to speak of my exertions in the cause of elementary education.

The supposition that it would give me great pleasure to be present at such a Convention, and to contribute by any means in my power to the success of this great improvement in our system, the establishment of County Superintendents, was but justice to my feelings. I would cheerfully make any sacrifice of personal convenience to be present, that I might contribute to animate the Deputy Superintendents in the zealous and faithful discharge of duties so vital to this great cause. As a heavy responsibility lies upon them, it is the duty of every good citizen to render all the aid in his power, to enable them to meet it.

But, gentlemen, I may not violate my engagements to the government, by neglecting the very important and laborious business that devolves upon the department in my charge, at this crisis in our public affairs, and when Congress is in session. I may not even indulge myself in recreations that would require much less time than a journey to Utica.

I am, therefore, most reluctantly obliged to decline your kind invitation, but my heart will be with you, and I shall look with great anxiety for the results of the Convention.

Believe me, gentlemen, individually and collectively,

Your sincere friend, and obd't serv't.

J. C. SPENCER.

Mr. KING, from the committee on business, reported—recommending the appointment by the Chair, of committees on the following subjects, to wit: on text books; on methods of teaching; on the duties of Deputy Superintendents; on the mutual duties of parents and teachers; on the employment of female teachers; on school houses; on union schools; on school discipline; on district libraries; on vocal music; on normal schools; on school conventions and celebrations; on the co-operation of the press; and on the inspection of teachers; such committees to consist of three.

The report was agreed to, after being so modified on motion of Mr. FINCH, as to require the committee on text books to consist of one from each senate district; and on motion, another committee on resolutions and an address, and on other subjects, was also directed to be appointed.

On motion of Mr. KING, invitations were extended to the Hon. SAMUEL YOUNG, HORACE MANN, Esq. of Massachusetts, and Professor POTTER, of Union College, to address the Convention; and Messrs. KING, DWIGHT and FINCH were appointed a committee to communicate to these gentlemen the request of the Convention.

Agreeably to arrangement, on consultation with these gentlemen, the Convention adjourned to the First Presbyterian Church, to hear the address of Col. Young, State Superintendent.

Wednesday, 2 o'clock P. M.

The President announced the appointment of the following committees:

Business Committee—Messrs. King, Tooker, Burdick, A. Wright, Pope, Williams, Hopkins, Parker.  
Normal Schools—Messrs. King, Dwight, Hough.  
Resolutions—Messrs. Monitor, Rochester, Burdick.

Text Books—Messrs. Rochester, Patchin, J. B. Bowen, Wing, Randall, Smith, King, Clement.

School Houses—Messrs. Henry, Palmer, Holcom.

Female Teachers—Messrs. Dwight, Denman, Tidd.

Method of Teaching—Messrs. Wing, Edwards, Stevens.

Duties of Parents and Teachers—Messrs. Tooker, Frazier, Shumway.

School Discipline—Messrs. Goodrich, Douglass, Reynolds.

Union Schools—Messrs. Fonda, Burdick, Shaw.

District Libraries—Messrs. Sprague, McFarland, Fitts.

Inspection of Teachers—Messrs. Woodin, Moxon, Williams.

Vocal Music—Messrs. J. B. Bowen, Tallmadge, Wheeler.

School Laws and Regulations—Messrs. Finch, Nay, Palmer.

Co-operation of the Press—Messrs. Dwight, Pope, Fonda.

School Conventions and Celebrations—Messrs. W. Wright, Woodin, Holcom.

District School Journal—Messrs. Cleveland, Edwards, Patchin, On Attendance—Messrs. Parker, Moxon, Clement.

Mr. KING offered the following, which was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That the unanimous thanks of the members of this Convention be, and herewith are, tendered to the Hon. S. Young, for his able, eloquent, and appropriate address before them, and they respectfully request a copy for publication.

Mr. DWIGHT here called attention to the fact, that there were many gentlemen present who had been drawn there from all parts of this and other states, by an intense interest in this subject of common schools, and remarked that it would be but an act of courtesy to admit them to a seat in the Convention, and to a participation in its proceedings. He moved therefore, that this courtesy be extended to all such, with the single reservation that they were not to vote.

The motion was unanimously agreed to.

Mr. MOUTON, from the committee on resolutions, reported a series, which were taken up separately, debated, and adopted as follows:

Resolved, That inasmuch as education is the germ of all improvements, the security of all rights, civil and religious, the source of all real prosperity, and the only hope of our beloved country, we therefore solemnly pledge ourselves to its sacred cause, in full confidence that He who rules over all, will bless every effort to diffuse that virtue and knowledge, which are the light and life of human society.

Resolved, That the hopes of the Christian, the schemes of the philanthropist and the plans of the statesman have been, and will be foiled while ignorance and passion guard the inlets of the mind. For no reformation can be permanent, and no social condition safe, that rests not on the virtue and intelligence of the people.

Resolved, That whether we regard the moral, intellectual, or physical well-being of man, whether we would elevate the character or increase the wealth of society, the surest and promptest means to attain our end, is to develop by a thorough and careful culture, the common mind; that wherever there is a man, there may be power wisely and successfully to use those advantages which nature everywhere offers to intelligence.

Resolved, That whereas education is most needed wherever the people are most insensible to its advantages; and whereas the difficulty in all educational improvements lies less in the amount of labor to be done, than in the opinion that little is requisite, it therefore becomes the first and chief duty of those to whom the supervision of the schools is entrusted, to rouse the public interest by illustrating unceasingly in their lectures, addresses, and published communications, the relations between ignorance and poverty, vice and wretchedness, and between knowledge and the moral and physical well-being of man.

Resolved, That the best police for our cities, the lowest insurance of our houses, the firmest security for our banks, the most effective means of preventing pauperism, vice and crime, and the only sure defence of our country, are our common schools; and woe to us, if their means of education be not commensurate with the wants and the powers of the people.

Resolved, That to supply instruction and to stimulate the people to receive it, is not the sole duty. A greater duty lies beyond; that of securing the best instruction that circumstances will admit.

Resolved, That we look with confidence to our colleges and academies, for zealous and cordial co-operation in our efforts to improve common schools; that from them the schools hope for teachers worthy of training the opening mind of a nation, and that in turn, the schools will send them scholars worthy of their highest honors.

Resolved, That man cannot propose a higher and holier object of deliberation than education itself; and he who educates a child to fulfill his duties to his fellow man, his country and his God, discharges a higher trust than the statesman who fences round the physical interests of society.

The fifth resolution being under consideration,

Mr. KING remarked, that the resolution struck upon the very subject, in reference to which this convention had assembled, to wit: the improvement of common schools. The object was to make education common to all—that like the blessed sun, it might diffuse its radiance throughout this land, lighting up, not merely the palace of the wealthy, but the lowly cottage of the poor. When our men of wealth could be taught the important lesson, that their greatest interest lies not in endowing banks and rail-roads, but in working those mines of inexhaustible wealth which were to be found in every district, then, and not till then, could the responsibilities assumed by us, be said to be fully discharged. He knew not how it was in other sections of the State, but he did know that in his own neighborhood, the feeling in behalf of education had long lain dormant, and that it required, he feared, more talent and ingenuity than he possessed, to ignite the latent fire, and blow it into a flame. It was true, that in his county of Kings, there were some schools, he was proud to say, that were noble monuments of its enterprise and wealth. In the city of Brooklyn, there were some 3,000 children in actual attendance at the common schools. Four of the school houses in the city had cost \$10,000 each. Yet the feeling that should be there was wanting. They who were able to sustain these institutions, regarded them with indifference, if not with positive disgust. The reason was, that common school education had been too common in one sense, and not common enough in another. They were of too low a grade to answer the purpose for which they were intended, and hence found little favor with those who were able to command better instruction for their children. To convince such that the best security for their property is to be sought in the common school, the standard of common school education must be raised. He was happy to say, however, that he had succeeded, by un-

remitting effort, by addresses to neighborhoods, and other means which it was unnecessary to specify, in arousing a spirit which would, ere long, manifest itself in good fruits.

Perhaps, said Mr. KING, there was in no county more repugnance to this new office of Deputy Superintendent, than in his own, under the impression that it was useless. But happily by dint of great exertion—by monthly meetings of the inspectors, trustees and commissioners, in the city, and by quarterly meetings in the county, at which all matters having reference to the schools were discussed; by pursuing a strictly advisory course, according to every man that respect which he demanded for himself; and endeavoring to convince all with whom he was thrown into contact, that he came among them as a co-laborer; this feeling had subsided, and the improvement in the condition of the schools showed the good effect of what had been done.

Mr. TOOKER objected to the assumption in the resolution, as originally reported, that our common schools were the best of common schools, and therefore the best security. &c. Our common schools were very bad, and he suggested the substitution of the words "well regulated" for "our;" so that it would read well regulated common schools. With this modification, he approved the resolution. It was a fact that about nineteen-twentieths of our population found their education in the common schools only. He had been told today by the eminent man now holding the station of State Superintendent, that no less than three distinguished individuals had reached the highest post of honor in the gift of the American people, who had received their education, if not exclusively in the common schools, at least not in the higher seminaries of learning. It was admitted on all hands, that the common schools were the life-boat of this people, and their improvement should be the great aim of the statesman and the philanthropist. He trusted every member of the Convention would feel and act up to their responsibilities as pioneers in this great moral and mental enterprise, and that to-day, an impulse would be given to the great cause that would be felt throughout the state. Why was it that so much money was drawn from the pockets of the people and poured into some common treasury to protect our dwellings from the incendiary? Why were so many bolts and bars and sentinels thrown around our moneyed institutions? Why so much jeopardsy of life, if the causes were not to be sought in the ignorance which prevails to so great a degree among us? Hence the importance of every effort to pour light into the darkened mind—to elevate the moral man—impress upon the public sense, the weighty responsibilities thrown upon all, to their country and to God. Until this was done, all effort in any other direction would prove futile and vain. Mr. T. concluded with the remark, that he should, before the Convention adjourned, take occasion, if no other member should, to point out what he regarded as radical defects in our common school system.

Prof. POTTER remarked, that the resolution embodied a great many incontestible truths—truths of immense importance just at this time. The radical vice of our common school system, in his judgment, was not the want of the proper interest on the subject on the part of teachers. It was not the want of a general conviction of the importance of education, for no truth was more firmly riveted in the public mind. The grand difficulty was, the prevalent misapprehension as to what education meant. The fact that all were educated, or might be educated, by being sent to school. The phrase "well regulated" was vastly important. That was the great truth we had to press home on the minds of the people. It was universally admitted, that education was indispensable to a free government, to human welfare; but the truth that must be as generally recognized, before any radical reform can be brought about, was that we might have poor schools. The great mission to which we were called, was the regeneration of our common schools—to infuse into them the elements of a new and higher life. That was a noble mission. Never were men called to a higher work than had been thrown upon the Deputy Superintendents by the legislature of the state. But he did not rise to go into the social bearings of education. There was a gentleman before him, [Mr. MANN, of Massachusetts,] than whom no one was better able to do that and all other subjects to which he chose to give his attention, ample justice. He hoped Mr. MANN would be called upon to speak to the question.

Mr. MANN, upon the call of the Convention, came forward. He could not, he said, be taken by surprise on the general subject before the Convention, though he confessed he was taken by surprise in being required to speak at this moment. That the resolution before the Convention contained most important and indestructible truths, no man could deny. His mind rather went from the admission of the truths, to an inquiry into the remedy to be applied to the evils said to exist. The great evil was said to consist in the imperfect education obtained at the common schools; in the fact that while they retained the form of schools, they lacked the substance; that they were bodies, if not absolutely without a soul, yet with hearts beating feebly, and scarcely propelling the vital current of life out to the extremities. What was wanted was not the education of a few, but the education of all: because it was obvious, look into what department of life you would, that a few ignorant and vicious men could baffle all the efforts and jeopard all the interests of the great majority of conscientious, able, active men, contending against them. One man could destroy; one incendiary could burn, more than a thousand could build up. And this was just as true in the moral and social world, as in the material. One bad man, acting antagonistically to the general interests of society, could defeat the efforts of forty-nine out of every fifty, in the whole community. Hence the necessity of the universality of education; not education merely in populous cities and towns; not in the centres of towns, but through the remotest bounds of every community, on the borders and confines of civilization, not less than at the metropolis. For unless this was done; they who fancied themselves secure, would find that danger and injury were imminent over them. This might be illustrated by references to every department of society; but he must leave gentlemen to follow out the view he had presented.

Our schools, it seemed to him, were calculated to reach deeper in this direction, than any institution to which the



hopes of the philanthropist had ever been directed. There were two attributes or qualities belonging to our schools, which it seemed important to present to the consideration of intelligent minds. The first was, the universality with which common schools might be made to operate, covering the whole surface of society, and reaching the very motives of human action. The law took cognizance only of the outward actions of men, not the spring, the motives of those acts. Criminal jurisdiction was also local, and reached only a portion of the criminal acts. A man might do what he pleased just over your southern, or northern, or western state line, and if he should escape here, he is safe. Your law, so far from punishing him, throws its shield around him. That great institution, in fact, on which you have hitherto relied, is found to be insufficient to heal the wounds which society has suffered, and still suffers. Mr. M. wished it were possible, by a course of statistical inquiry, to ascertain the expense of administering the criminal law in any community in this country, compared with the expense of education. Criminal jurisdiction applied probably only to one in several hundreds of our population. And yet, taking into consideration the property the criminal destroys, what he appropriates to his own use, what he utterly consumes and sweeps out of existence by incendiarism, add to this the expenses of pursuing fugitives, and arranging them; compute the time and money spent in the grand jury room; count the number of witnesses; the time consumed by government officers in the prosecution, and by others in the defence, and by the courts in adjudicating them; and, he ventured to say, that the sum total necessary in any community to correct these few cases, would exceed the sum expended for the education of the whole people. The courts which administered the law, had nothing to do with childhood, nothing to do with honest men. They laid by, until the temptation was presented and yielded to, and then, when the mischief was done, they set to work in their slow, harsh and sometimes cruel way, to do something in the way of vengeance; but how little could they do in the way of redress. But where did the common school begin? Not with men who commit crime, but with children before they can be supposed capable of crime. Instead of turning out bad men, they turned out valuable citizens, who add to the common wealth and the common happiness of society. One good school teacher would do more to relieve society of these misfortunes, than all the judges in the land, because he begins earlier and his influences reach deeper.

Another great institution on which we relied, and which he valued as much as any, but which he must compare with the institution [the common school] of which he spoke, and that was the institution of the church. Whom did the church reach? One-half of the mass of the community were outside of its action; they were not seen inside the church. But the regular ministrations of the church can act only on those who come within its walls. They do not act on the community as a whole. And though they do go into the motives of men, yet by the law or custom of societies addressing themselves almost entirely to adults, they did not reach the evil in its germination. He acknowledged that in one point, they acted on the same principle as the good school teacher. They went to the heart, the spring of all human action. If every thing was right there, all that emanated from it would be right. But even here, they had no advantage over the school teacher and the school had this advantage over them, that it reached all, and particularly the young. He averred, therefore, that the schools had the advantage over every institution yet devised by the ingenuity of mankind, to eradicate those evils that now diminished at least one-half the value of the life of every human being. For no man could deny that our lives would be more than doubled in value, if all around us was as it should be. Mr. M. looked on those engaged in this great work as devoted to the most sacred of causes. With an eye to the temporal and outward welfare of the people, they had an eye also to their intellectual advancement, and elevation to the level of any and every other country. But they went deeper. They reached as far into the moral nature and into futurity as any institution that existed. For the principles that should be and might be inculcated, of a moral and intellectual character, lay under the whole length of existence; and whatever affected these principles and that character, affected the individual whether in this life or in eternity.

Mr. CLEMENT followed, expressing the hope that this resolution would be adopted, because, he said, it was true, as he knew from observation. In reading the late report of our distinguished friend from Massachusetts, as Secretary of the Board of Education in that state, he was struck with the remarkable application of some of the truths there laid down to the state of things in Dutchess county. Though our friend had never perhaps been there, he told us all about it. He alluded to the conclusive proofs furnished in that report of the fact, that crime and ignorance go hand in hand. It was true, that in those parts of his county where education has taken a stronger hold of the minds and affections of the people, there the moral tone was higher than in other parts of it. Perhaps this result might be traced in some degree to the fact, that this part of the county bordered on the land of steady habits; but at any rate, in certain towns of the county, which it was perhaps unnecessary to mention, it was with great difficulty that persons could be induced to take the office of justice of the peace or constable, from the fact that there was nothing to do. There education triumphed. The people felt interested in it. And the expense of supporting paupers, or of criminal proceedings in those towns, were some fifty per cent less than in other towns in the county. He was fully convinced that capital could not be more safely or more profitably invested, than in well regulated schools. It was a lamentable fact, however, that something was wanting to excite interest, and to make men feel and think on this important subject.

Mr. HENRY, of Herkimer, expressed his gratification that this subject had received its legitimate prominence. He alluded to what was understood by moral training. It was the great point which it was incumbent on us to hold up to the view of this people. It was not necessary to spend much time in convincing them that a well stored mind, a cultivated intellect, was a great possession. Hundreds and thousands knew this—felt it—acted on it. This was not the great truth which ought to be pressed upon the public mind.

The necessity and duty of doing to others, under all circumstances, as we would have them do to us, was the all-important principle to be inculcated with all diligence; and yet, when we talked on this subject, with how little attention was it received! The impression seemed to be that this was all well enough to talk about, well enough in theory, well enough in profession, but that it was never intended to be carried into practice; on the contrary, that the rule was the other way. This was the great point after all, and it was because we had forgotten this important precept, that we were suffering under the embarrassments of these times, because we have sought to take, without giving in return a full and fair equivalent. This was the secret of the difficulties of the present time. It was a mistake to suppose that this principle of action was not appreciated or valued by the great mass of the people, however much they might neglect to practice on it. Analyze the reasons for the popularity of some of the great men of this nation, and you will find them based upon their observance of this great moral principle. What had given to Washington's name, its commanding influence? In point of intellect he was not the superior to all other men in this country. By no means. The secret was here. Washington made the same impression on those with whom he associated in the field, and in public life, that he did on his school-fellows, and that impression was, that he could not lie. And this was the secret of his popularity. He was inflexibly honest. Why was it that the great American heart leaped not at the name of Arnold, as it did at the name of Morgan? Arnold, no man doubted, had superior military talent, and courage, and coolness which we look for in the soldier. But he lacked integrity. As a mere intellectual man, perhaps the superior of Aaron Burr never existed. And yet what was his fate—what his influence with the American people? To find favor with the people of this country, we must build on this great principle of moral rectitude. It was to this point that we should direct attention constantly. If this great principle of doing to others as we would have them do to us, were carried into the practice of life, we should need very little law. Every man would be a law unto himself. He hoped every deputy would feel that this was the important thing. In the able address we heard this morning, he was glad to see man presented before us in his moral as well as mental attributes. By giving to each his relative importance, we should produce the perfect man—the good citizen—a man under all circumstances, and a law unto himself. And this was the great end we should keep in view, in our common school system.

Mr. CLEVELAND, of Greene, remarked, following up the train of observation commenced by Mr. Clement, that we might have the best school houses, and the best teachers in them, and yet fail for want of uniform text books, and such books as were suited to the capacity of children. He was fearful we should not get at this subject, unless more rapid progress was made in disposing of this resolution. The great difficulty was the variety of books in schools, and the great number of classes in consequence. In some schools containing twenty-two scholars, the chances were, that there were twenty-one classes. It would be safe to say nineteen.

The question was here taken and the resolution adopted, with Mr. Tooker's amendment, "well regulated" common schools.

#### NORMAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. KING, from the committee on this subject, reported by resolution, as follows:—

*Resolved*, That whereas, experience has fully shown both the efficiency and the importance of institutions for the instruction of teachers; we therefore respectfully request the Superintendent of Common Schools, to consider the expediency of taking such measures as will enable New-York, as well as Massachusetts, to test their usefulness and enjoy their benefits.

The resolution having been read,

Prof. POTTER remarked, that he had just now performed the agreeable office of calling out one of our friends from Massachusetts, [Mr. Mann,] without giving him notice; but though ungraceful perhaps in him, the response which he drew out was, he felt, an ample vindication of the liberty he had taken. His only object was to make our friends at home here, and as the old Bay State had sent us another representative—a gentleman who had devoted his best talents to the cause of education, in the catholic sense of the term, and who he knew had given much attention to the subject of normal schools,—he hoped that gentleman would be willing also to address the convention.

Mr. EMERSON, of Massachusetts, being called for by acclamation, came forward. He confessed that he had paid a good deal of attention to the subject of normal schools, and the conclusions to which he had come were, in short, these: that they were institutions of such importance in reference to common schools, that no one who should examine the subject fully, could fail to see that they were absolutely essential. If they had existed for twenty years, he believed the feeling of dissatisfaction now so common every where in regard to common schools, would no where have existed. He referred to the feeling—which he presumed was not uncommon in this state—still common (though he rejoiced to say, daily disappearing), in the Bay State,—a feeling that the office of teacher of a common school was not the most high and respectable in which man could engage. It should be so. And wherever normal schools shall have been established long enough to produce their effects, and to create a class of teachers of common schools such as they should be, he believed that universally that feeling of dissatisfaction would subside. It would be seen and realized, that to teach well a common school, such as the ten thousand that this state numbered, was one of the highest duties to which a man could be called. He knew of no school—of no kind of school—which, properly taught, would not be enough to command all the energy, to tax the whole nature of any man, however highly endowed. As common schools were now managed, very little intellect went into the work. The very office which should reach the heart and soul and mind of the whole community, was usually engaged in by men who brought little heart, or soul, or mind to the business. It would not be so if these men could be made sensible of the great duty on which they entered, when they engaged in a school.

To a convention as respectable in point of character as this—to gentlemen who had long devoted themselves to the

interest and business of education—it was hardly necessary to say, that to teach well, a man must be specifically qualified for the task. This was truly in consonance with the observation and experience of mankind in every other calling. In every thing else, to do well,—to do tolerably well,—an education was required. In every one of the professions, a high standard of education is required of those engaged in them—a long course of instruction is regarded as a pre-requisite. To say that a teacher of a school can perform his duty without a specific education for that duty, was to say that it was a lower calling than that of the mere operator on the soil, or in any other occupation,—that it was the only calling which commands and gives occupation for a whole life, which requires no previous training. Every person who takes charge of a common school, should be so trained. An individual instructed in a school of the highest character—with examples before him of the best modes of teaching every thing to be taught—the best methods of reaching the mind and heart of a child might, after acquiring all that such a school can give—be qualified to teach. How few teachers were there of this character? Usually, a person who went from a school to enter on the business of a teacher, began just on the low level from which he started. How low that was, the testimony of many there present had shown.

He believed, therefore, that the common schools being every where so low, the only way in which they could be raised, was by having teachers, men and women, qualified for the important office of teaching, in schools especially assigned for that purpose. He agreed with one gentleman who had just now spoken, that generally, the academies and colleges did not answer this purpose. The academy might undoubtedly do so, if the head of it gave his whole attention to the subject. If there could be a department in an academy, in which a person of the requisite qualifications could give his whole attention to the preparation of teachers, it might be done there as well as any where else. The only danger was, that there might be (and experience, he understood, had shown that there would be,) a spirit of rivalry or something worse, between those who were preparing for this work of teaching and those who were preparing themselves for what was considered a higher object. If the business of teacher were what it should be—if the social place of the teacher were what it should be—then the man preparing to become a teacher of youth would stand as high as the expounder of the gospel, or the law, or the healer of diseases. But such was not the fact. He maintained that it could only be in an academy where a teacher devoted his whole energy to this duty alone, that the experiment could be fairly tried. One of the great truths that applied to all arts and sciences was that no man could do two things as well as one at the same time—and if there was any thing that required a man's undivided energy, it was the work of preparing teachers. Colleges did not furnish teachers—though they might, if there were a department for the special preparation of teachers, and if the calling of teachers were considered as honorable as the professions—and answer a better purpose than a normal school department in an academy. But what was the fact? Most of those in Massachusetts—and it must be so in this state—who left college to enter a school, did not take up teaching as it were worthy of them. Many engaged in schools while in college; but they regarded it as merely a preparation for something else—as the means of getting money to enable them to devote themselves to something in which their hearts were engaged. Now the great duty of a teacher could not be performed by the by; a man could not be teaching and looking forward to some other and better pursuit. The only man who could perfectly succeed as a teacher, was he who regarded it as the highest and noblest office in which a man could engage. He believed, therefore, that the only way in which teachers could be perfectly qualified, was in schools separately devoted to the work.

There were a great many things that went to the preparation of a teacher, that did not make part of the training of any other individual in life. A man must be taught first all things taught at the common schools. But that was not enough. It was not enough to be able to read perfectly well himself, to teach others to read perfectly well, besides the art of reading itself,—the art of communicating what he has acquired, must be known. He must have learned all the various methods of teaching to read. For example—in teaching the alphabet, the pointing out of letter after letter, was considered teaching it. Another mode was to teach one letter at a time, which was better. Another mode, recently adopted, and with success, was teaching by words instead of letters. Those who have taught in the old fashioned way, first by letters, and then by spelling words by column, have found this great evil to result—that the child is for months occupied with words and words only, and that there was nothing for the child to think of. And what habits of mind did a child acquire under this mode of instruction? A habit which it was almost impossible to break him of. Looking at a book, in childhood, as a book of words only,—not as a thing to excite attention,—words come to be regarded as not always significant of an idea—as something to be spelled or pronounced, but without any meaning connected with them. Thousands of words were now taught in that way, without an attempt to communicate corresponding ideas. That was the fault of the mode of teaching. Hence it was that we must begin anew. We must teach, first those words which signified something; thus, these characters signify man—these other characters signify ox—and so on. In teaching a large number of words, every one of which is made an object of thought and conversation, the child was made to connect words with thought from the beginning. Thus the letters might be taught, one being taken that the idea of thoughts being connected with words, shall be always prominent. Now these different methods of teaching to read should be presented to a person preparing to teach. He should know all the different methods, and then may be left to take his choice, as of every thing else,—and he should be taught all the best methods of teaching, as a separate thing.

Then, as to the kind of knowledge that may be communicated—by what art the attention of a child is to be excited and kept excited—so that he may consider reading as an action of mind always, from the beginning—and for every thing else, there were a great variety of methods of instruction. Every



one who had taught arithmetic knew that there were a great variety of ways of presenting the subject. The business of the teacher being not merely to teach, but to teach in the best mode, all the different methods should be presented, that the teacher may make his selection. One great organ which produced so great a change wherever it had been introduced—which might be considered a new organ—was the blackboard. You might tell a teacher that he should have a blackboard—that it is a very good thing in teaching reading, writing, arithmetic and geography—and if he was a sagacious man, and had such readiness of understanding, and so much enthusiasm, that upon being merely told that the blackboard had been used with good success, he would set himself to experimenting and finding out how to teach with it—that might be enough for him. But not one in a thousand men is of this description. Whereas if the blackboard were presented to him, and the teacher taught how much might be accomplished by it, and in what way, you then made sure of the proper and best use of it by him when he came to teach. A course of instruction as to the use of the blackboard alone, could not well occupy less than three months. A person in the habit of using it in his instructions, would not be able to communicate to the best teacher all the uses of that single organ, in less than three months. For it prescribed a mode of teaching every thing taught in a school. Again, as to English grammar. He had never been into a school in this state, but he presumed there were multitudes of schools in this state where grammar was so taught as to be of no sort of use whatever to the pupil. He had seen—he had taught large classes of boys who had been taught in what was considered excellent schools—who had been exercised in grammar, in parsing, seven years every day—who after all, could not write a sentence without making a mistake in grammar! These same boys had been taught spelling every day for seven years, and yet, not one in five of them could write a sentence without making mistakes in spelling also! They had been taught spelling and grammar in good schools all that time, without having learned the least of the practical use of either! Were there not schools of that kind in this state? Grammar was so badly taught in many schools, that he had come to the conclusion himself, that it would be much better for the English language, if grammar were not taught at all. And yet, any one of a hundred of the young men commonly employed to teach in common schools, might in a few weeks, with the aid of an able teacher, be taught to teach grammar without a book, so that a boy in six months, might be made familiar with every part of speech, and all their ordinary uses, inflections and relations.

Now the objection to any other institution except one for the purpose of teaching the art of teaching, was that every thing else must be going on at the same time. The teacher of an academy could not direct his attention to the mode of teaching the letters, when his mind was occupied with the higher studies and with the languages. He could not call his scholars together, and teach them how, without a book, to teach all the principles of grammar—and then set the whole school to making the application—first, teaching them the principles, and then setting them to teaching. This could not be done in any school but a school for teachers—and for the reason that it would interrupt all the other business of the school. A teacher in a school where the art of teaching is a secondary matter, might talk of the different methods—but could he sit down and give whole hours to the practical explanation of these different methods—so that a class of forty would at the end of six months, be able to carry them into practice? That was what we wanted for all other schools, except schools for teachers. The idea of having a separate school for little children, for the mere purpose of enabling teachers to put what they learn in practice, would be thought chimerical. And yet, it was admitted now, that in every normal school, such a school of little children was essential. Every well conducted normal school has such an appendage. A teacher had not only explained to him the different methods of teaching, and had to go through the different processes, but to go into the school of little children, and apply them to practice. Could it be, that by thus communicating to the teacher the art of teaching everything usually taught, and after putting him through a course of practice in the school-room, making him still more familiar with his business, by experimenting himself in a school into which the supervisor goes occasionally, to see that he is carrying out and applying principles correctly? Could it be that this was not a more sure mode of making a good teacher, than a course of instruction, of which the art of teaching was made a subordinate and incidental pursuit? But, Mr. E. said, he feared he had transcended his time, and he would desist.

Prof. POTTER followed, saying, that having called out his friend from Massachusetts, who had just taken his seat, he might claim the privilege of a few remarks in reply. He did not know that, on this subject, he was entirely orthodox, according to the Boston standard, as set up by his friends, who might be called the fathers of these schools. It was, perhaps, the more incumbent on him therefore, to speak, in order that his other friend from Mass. (Mr. M.) might have an opportunity of giving us further light on the subject. Prof. P. said, that on this subject of normal schools, he did not go as far as Mr. EMERSON, though he had faith in them. He would not have them to the exclusion of the department now existing in the academies for the qualification of teachers. The principle on which all his friend's reasoning rested was, that teaching was a specific profession, and that for that profession you must have specific training. The gentleman asked if gentlemen of the professions had no specific training? Prof. P.'s reply was, that there were many examples that might be cited the other way. There was no training for the great business of legislation—no education beyond what the legislator acquired in the discharge of that most responsible trust. There was no specific education for the discharge of some of the most important functions devolved on man, in the relations of life. That most important of all offices, devolved by God on human beings, the discharge of the parental responsibilities, was a teacher's office, for which no special training was contemplated in any system of education. What, then, was the true principle? It seemed to him to be this. Educate a man—educate a woman—give them well disciplined minds, and you had then prepared them for educating themselves up to the standard

and wants of any profession. He was aware there were exclusive duties devolved on the medical and other professions, that were exceptions to this remark, but they were but exceptions. His friend, perhaps, would tell him, that you could not train a man to make a shoe or hat without an apprenticeship. True; but the business of making shoes and hats, was the business of but a small portion of the community. The great business of moulding the youthful mind, that was a charge which God had devolved on every human being, and therefore education, if it was to be specific, should prepare a man for the enlightened discharge of that important trust. He trusted the time would come, when in our seminaries of learning, the science of training the youthful mind would be considered as essential as astronomy or natural philosophy, when it would be felt that the one great duty of the educated mind was to discharge the trust of teacher, and that it was one of the highest obligations reposed in man, though not a parent, to send forth again whatever light may have visited his own mind, to illuminate the world.

He must remind gentleman who referred him to the mechanical trades, that the business of educating a spirit—of moulding the moral principle—was a different thing from making a shoe or a table. The mechanic can lay down precise rules for holding your tool, and laying out your materials, in order to bring out a material machine, but there were no such precise rules for training up the immortal spirit. Rules, he admitted, there were—rules not generally appreciated—not generally understood, and he admitted that normal schools, for imparting a more general knowledge of these rules, were all important. He should regard them as all important as a temporary measure—to train up one generation of teachers, as it were, and not as a permanent system; for, to undertake to pass all teachers through this mill, to produce ten thousand teachers (one for each school district,) would require an immense outlay of funds. The principle on which we should advocate these schools, should be to plant over this state, five hundred good teachers, as central lights—radiant points—to the end that they might spread all around them the influence of their successful example, until the entire system shall be regenerated and revived. The best mode of training teachers, was by example. A good teacher was himself, in his course of procedure, the very best means of teaching teachers. Every individual taught by such a man, would be prepared to be a teacher in the Sunday school, in the family, and in the common school. Prof. P. concluded this portion of his remarks with an eloquent eulogium upon the noble specimens of teaching to be found in Massachusetts, and especially in the celebrated female school in Pemberton Square, in the city of Boston, where, he said, his friend [Mr. EMERSON,] who had been trained in no normal school, enjoyed the high privilege of training up the young mind in knowledge and virtue, and sending delight to the heart of many an anxious parent. And, he added, that when his friend asserted, that there was no way to make a teacher, but to pass him through that mill, hundreds would rise up from their graves over the fields of New England to reproach him for the heresy.

But Prof. P. went for normal schools in the proper place and time, but not as indispensable for every teacher. He believed the departments for training teachers in the academies, were doing good. He believed they might do more good. He believed there were defects about them—defects that could not be fully remedied under their present constitution. The great defect was in regard to training for the mechanical part of teaching. He had already suggested that if the science or theory and practice of teaching were but introduced into our seminaries, that every human being might be taught how to teach as well as how to know; for the one was but the practical application of the other. But after all, it did require a great deal of iteration and reiteration of mechanical routine, that could not be introduced into an ordinary academy; and he believed it would not be anticipated. It seemed to him, as a necessary incident to our present system, and with which, so far as its legal constitution was concerned, our system would be almost without objection, that we should have in addition just one thing. That was at Albany, a great training school for teachers, where some three hundred might be assembled, and taught in regard to the theory of teaching (having been taught the several branches of ordinary school instruction before they came) and then put into a model school, and set to putting in practice what they may have learned, under the eye of an able superintendent. He believed this training should be superadded to previous study in an academy; and every good academy was an academy for the preparation of teachers, and was devoting more or less attention to this special subject. He repeated, that after we had done all for teachers that could be done in an academy, to send them then to this model school, would furnish all that we required to perfect our system. But it was not necessary by one fell swoop, to destroy what we had. The great object should be to improve, develop and perfect it.

Mr. FITTS, of Niagara, remarked, that he had been faithless in regard to normal schools, and he confessed, he was not satisfied now. The remarks of the gentleman from Massachusetts, though interesting and clearly presented, were not satisfactory to his mind. He had taken pains to inquire into this subject of normal schools, and if he understood it, they differed in no respect as to book knowledge, and the development of the mental powers, from other schools, except in teaching how to teach. Now took it for granted, that a man who could not learn the details of school-room management by experience is one, even if he means to teach as a profession, who could not be taught these details by precept. The gentleman from Mass. virtually admitted this, and Mr. F. was inclined to think, from his experience, that the majority of our teachers would not be benefited by normal schools, were they to attend them three years; even if they got their diploma, and for this reason, (for having himself been a teacher for ten years, he stated it with the more freedom) that they had not generally that rarest of Heaven's gifts, common sense. He believed that here we commenced at the wrong end. The principal cause for fault finding was poor teachers; and yet, the fault lays with the people themselves. As soon as they were willing to pay a proper compensation adequate to the services of competent and experienced teachers, they would find their way

among us without normal schools. He regarded teachers as a marketable commodity; the supply of which would always keep pace with the demand, and as soon as the people would make it an object, honorable as well as profitable, to go into the business, there would be no lack of good teachers, without normal schools.

Mr. MANN, of Massachusetts, being now called upon, addressed the convention. He would only avail himself of the privilege of speaking for a moment, because he had had actual knowledge of these schools in a neighboring state, [the Bay State.] They were established there between two and three years ago; and he could now speak of the results. With permission, however, he would first say a word as to the necessity for such schools. It seemed to him no fact was more plain and obvious than that it was one thing to learn, and another to teach. The one was the ability of acquiring—the other the power of imparting—processes as different as could be named. For a learner, it was only necessary to study and understand his own mind—to find out in what way he himself could most rapidly and thoroughly master a subject; but for a teacher it was necessary to know in what way different minds, with different natural tendencies, and with different habits of thought, could master a subject most rapidly and thoroughly. How much there was in this distinction, those could understand who know that a teacher has all varieties and shades of mind to deal with, while the mind of the learner is but one. A learner is like a mariner sailing for one port. It is enough if he knows all the crooks in the channel that leads to it. But a teacher is like a navigator who is called upon to enter, in succession, all ports, and therefore he must be acquainted with all channels, and with rocks and shallows also.

It had been said that forming a mind, cultivating the intellectual, and training the moral powers, was not like making a table or a shoe. Can it be meant by this that the former is a less difficult work than the latter—that a man can not saw boards or cut leather without instruction, but that he can impart knowledge, develop capacities, and cultivate sentiments of justice, conscience, and love to God and man, without counsel or discretion? Most readily did he admit that teaching was unlike any mechanical pursuit; but it was unlike it in being more difficult, more profound, more important, and therefore should be unlike it, in requiring, not less, but more preparation,—vastly more, infinitely more. The only reason why we did not all see the subject in this light was because we had specimens of what instruction and preparation would do in the mechanical arts, while as yet, we knew comparatively little of what may be done by preparation, in the science, and the art of teaching.

It had also been said that the Creator had made every parent a teacher. True. But did it follow that because the Creator had established no institution for teaching parents; that therefore, all the duties of the parental relation would be well discharged without any, or would not be better discharged with? Let the deplorable condition of thousands and millions of children, not only in our own, but in all preceding times, answer the question. If such were the legitimate inference from the fact that the Creator had established this relation without providing any mode of teaching parents, then we must discard all our schools, academies and seminaries of learning for in the same sense in which God has made no provision for educating parents, he has built no school-house, academy or college. This business of teaching was not like making a shoe; it was as much above it as the objects were different, and the knowledge and preparation requisite for the one was as much greater than that required for the other, as the subject matter of the one was more important than that of the other. The civilized man would not receive the coat of the savage because he knew how to make a better one; and so when we come to be a little more advanced, we shall be as dissatisfied with our present means of education, as we should now be with the wardrobe of the Feejee Islanders.

In the Massachusetts normal schools, Mr. M. said the pupils were required, as the terms of admission, to possess a high intellectual and good moral character, and to be able to pass an examination in the rudiments of a common school education. They were expected to possess the amount of knowledge ordinarily required of a teacher before entering on the duties of a common school. On admission, their first business was to review all the common school studies. By this mode, the principal assured himself of the extent and thoroughness of their attainments. If in any they were found deficient, they were required to supply it; the next step was to teach the pupils, how to impart knowledge to others; here the chief force was expended. First, they were taught by precept, and by reading in reference to the great principles on which all teaching should be conducted; and also in reference to the mode or manner in which the different branches should be taught—and different modes of teaching and explaining the same thing, to be varied according to differences in their future pupils. To the normal school, a model school, or school consisting of small children was attached. The children of the model school came from the neighborhood, and were such in all respects, as usually constitute our district schools. When the normal pupils were supposed to be competent to take charge of a class, two or more of them were drafted for a given time,—say for a fortnight,—and sent into the model school. The principal of the normal school goes into the model school every half day, and with beginners, perhaps more than once every half day,—superintends, directs, corrects, if need be, the conduct of those who are just beginning to apply their knowledge to practice. It is as with students of medicine: the student reads for a time; he then visits the bedside of the sick, examines symptoms, and proposes certain medical treatment, but all under the eye and subject to the correction of his master. The teacher who has had no special preparation or training for his work, but who thinks he can teach any body merely because he has himself been taught, is like a man who, having been sick with one disease, thinks himself capable not only of prescribing for the same disease, in all sorts of constitutions, but also of prescribing for all kinds of diseases.

And how is it, said Mr. M. with the legal profession? No man is so great a fool as to suppose that because he has had one law suit, he can go into court and manage all cases. Candidates for the legal profession first read books and hear lectures, they then do office business, then act as junior



counsel in unimportant cases, under the direction of a superior; and only after years of study, are they supposed competent to take the lead in important cases.

Sometimes the principal of the normal school takes his whole school into the model school. There all are spectators, while the regular exercises are going on. When through, they all return to the normal school-room, and there a discussion is held relative to the manner in which the recitations were conducted, each pupil expresses an opinion; and the case is summed up by the principal's giving his. Thus, at the end of every day, mistakes are corrected, which under other circumstances, would be acted upon a thousand times, perhaps persevered in for life.

As to the means of directing and governing children,—that constituted one of the main items of instruction at the normal school. The model school which had been in operation the longest,—a little more than two years,—he could say was the most beautiful school he ever saw. From its commencement to the present time, the children had been governed without the striking of a single blow or the infliction of any corporal punishment whatever; and without ever appealing to the sentiment of rivalry or emulation. A harsh word is never heard within those walls. The common motive-powers of fear and emulation are wholly discarded, and yet it was the most active and industrious of schools. It was a school of live children. (Laughter.) It was not still, because it was dead, but because it was at work; knowledge had been presented to them in so attractive a manner, they had been led to understand everything so thoroughly, that acquisition became a delight, and the school a place of the most gratifying resort. No ordinary inducement could keep them from the school.

Now the pupils of this normal school when they went out to teach, were able to do more and better than their master did when he began. Why? Because they have the benefit of his life of experience; otherwise they would have been reproducing his old errors, with the chance at least of never correcting them.

Another thing, Mr. M. wished to mention in relation to the principal of the school to which he was then referring,—because some supposed that the business of teaching how to teach was a small affair and could be carried on incidentally, as a collateral employment, and in connection with other duties. For between two and three years the gentleman of whom he spoke, had spent six hours a day in his normal school, two hours at least in the model school, and three or four hours besides, in preparing for recitations, writing lectures, &c. &c.; and yet complains of nothing so much as the want of time. Had he any other duty to discharge, his nature would break down, or one or the other must be neglected. Once every week, at least,—and sometimes he allowed his pupils to designate the time,—he took the recitation of the entire lesson upon himself. Where other teachers took up the book to hear the scholars recite, he laid down the book and recited himself. He went to the blackboard, and worked out arithmetical problems, or drew maps, or made and explained diagrams in geometry or natural philosophy,—in short, he became as a pupil, to show how a recitation should be performed. For this purpose he had to master all the lessons in detail, and this enabled him to ask questions that mean something, and to require something too in the answers, and not mere words. Mr. M. knew that teachers generally held themselves ready to make explanations when desired to do so by the scholar; and also that it was common for teachers to invite inquiry. But this was a very different thing from laying aside the book and reciting an entire lesson, taking up every thing in its order, and apportioning time to each part, according to its importance. When I taught school, said Mr. M., had I been required to lay down the book and recite the lesson myself, I am sure there would have been some pretty poor recitations. But these times of ignorance were winked at, (though we had to wink very hard not to see them.)

The standard of qualifications had been raised very much already, in Massachusetts, through the influence of these schools. He had received letters from many towns where these teachers had been employed, and the tenor of the whole testimony had been, that the second rate teachers from the normal schools were superior to any others they had ever had.

In proof of the effect which the normal schools had exerted upon the public mind, he would add, that when first established, they encountered violent opposition; some teachers thought that if better modes of instruction were introduced, their occupation would be gone. The adoption of a purer religion will be opposed by those who sell shrines for the old one. Some objected to them on account of the expense; some because their books had not been adopted; and some used the last argument of an ignorant man, that they were new; and some really honest persons could not see the utility or necessity of providing any better teachers than we already had. These various classes combined against the system, and although they had been chartered, and the necessary contracts made for the period of three years, yet before a single year had expired, a bill was introduced into the legislature to abolish them. All that the friends of education in Massachusetts could do, was barely sufficient to save them. The succeeding year the attack was renewed though with diminished effort and effect. But last winter, not only was no opposition raised against them, but the legislature, in a time of great pecuniary embarrassment in regard to their finances, voted the sum of \$18,000 for their continuance, without a word being said in their favor. Such had been the change of public opinion in Massachusetts, on this subject during so short a period. Three years ago these schools with their teachers, the board of education, with its secretary, were trembling on the verge of existence; we were, said Mr. M., brought to the block; we saw the guillotine suspended over our necks, and in imagination, our own heads rolling off into the basket, and yet such has already been the change in public opinion, that the institution is now considered as standing on a stable foundation, and should it be sustained for a few more years, he could not doubt that the state would be as firmly attached to it as to any other of her institutions. One thing was certain, that no man had ever visited these schools and gone away to condemn them. Those who had opposed and who still oppose, had taken the precaution not to be convinced of their error, by actual inspection; they were as wise one Martin Horley, a contem-

rary of Galileo, who denied the existence of Jupiter's four moons; and when Galileo asked him to look through his telescope and decide for himself, poor Martin replied, "I won't, for I am afraid if I look that I shall see them."

Mr. M. concluded by saying that he could wish no better fortune to New-York than that she should crown all her noble efforts in the cause of education by the establishment of one or more normal schools.

Mr. KING inquired how many schools there were of this character in Massachusetts?

Mr. MANN replied, three.

The Rev. Mr. PAGE of New York, inquired if there was any means of securing the services of these teachers, after they had been qualified at the normal school?

Mr. MANN said that when a candidate presented himself, the inquiry was made of him, if it were his intention, after having gone through a course of instruction in the school, to teach in the state? If the answer was affirmative, his word was taken for it,—reliance being placed on his conscience and honor. No bond or obligation was enacted to secure the fulfilment of this understanding. If he was to go to another state, then he was charged ordinary academical fees. He knew, however, of but a single instance, where one of these pupils went out of the state to teach.

The hour of six having arrived, and the address of Mr. MANN to the Convention having been appointed for the evening.

Mr. ROCHESTER moved that the Convention adjourn to meet again, at Bagg's Hotel, after the delivering of Mr. MANN's address at the church, and

The Convention adjourned until

Half past 9 P. M.

#### SCHOOL HOUSES.

Mr. HENRY, of Herkimer, from the committee on school houses, reported by resolution, as follows:

Resolved, That in general, our school houses are ill contrived, badly built, and shamefully neglected. That they in most instances are defective,

1. In being too small, and with desks and seats utterly unsuitable to the wants of children.

2. In the general want of wood-sheds, out-buildings and playgrounds.

3. In location and architectural beauty.

Resolved, That the friends of the schools be earnestly appealed to, to supply these requisites for the comfort, improvement, health and decency of the children.

Mr. HENRY said he did not know that it was necessary to accompany the report with any remark. He need scarcely tell gentlemen at all familiar with our schools, that the seats were in two many cases constructed without the least regard to the comfort of the scholars. Little children from six to eight years of age, were placed on benches without backs, and so high that their feet could not touch the floor; so that they were without support for backs or feet. It was impossible for "live children," such as were to be found in our schools, as well as those of Massachusetts, to remain long or easy in such a position. If any delegate would try the experiment, by seating himself on a table, he would find it next to impossible, without great effort to keep himself quiet fifteen minutes. But it seemed unnecessary to take up further time on this subject; and at this late hour, he would not detain the Convention further.

Mr. WING, of Warren, said he should think the gentleman had been through his county. There was very little to be said, if his description was applicable to the country generally. There seemed to be a total disregard of good taste or comfort in the construction of school houses. There was not one in the county of Warren, constructed on the right principles. He recollected visiting one school, where, from unexpected causes, the number of scholars had increased greatly, and beyond the capacity or rather accommodations of the district. There were about eighty in a small school house, built some twenty-five years ago, and according to the notions of school house building prevalent at that day. A large proportion of the seats for small scholars, were such as had been described. He found four boys perched up on a table—there being no other place for them. His observation in fact went to show, that in seven cases out of eight, there was a total disregard of comfort in the fitting up and construction of school houses. He hoped that it was not so bad in other counties.

Mr. SHUMWAY, of Essex, remarked that one great defect was the want of a play ground. In many cases, the district had no title to the land on which the school house stood. Many of them were on the highway. In passing through parts of St. Lawrence, Lewis and Jefferson on his way here, he observed particularly that all the school houses were on the line of the road, without play grounds or out-buildings. Generally, too, all were very much like those described by the gentleman from Herkimer.

Mr. WILLIAM WRIGHT, of Washington, said there was one thing remarkable about the location of school houses; aside from the great uniformity there was about them in other respects—such as their being very good in some sections and very bad in others—and that was, that whatever the value of land might be, as small a quantity and as inconvenient a location as could well be chosen, was generally selected. And even these small patches were sometimes trespasses on the highway. A large number were placed on some bleak knoll, or in some low valley, where it was difficult to get at them, without walking on stilts—and even these spots, low as the land might be, were as small as could be made, barely to answer the purpose. He was happy to say, however, that in the northern part of the county of Washington, there were a large number of new and excellent school houses. The suggestions made in the District School Journal on this subject had been acted on. A large number of very fine brick buildings had been built on the plan of the Journal. There too, the interests of education, in other respects, he found to correspond. There was more interest in the subject exhibited both in and out of the school. He found in them also generally very respectable teachers, and scholars pretty well advanced in their studies. They had also large play grounds, very handsomely ornamented with shrubbery and shade trees. The inference from all this could not escape his attention, that to render the associations connected with the school house agreeable, and to excite the emulation of the inhabitants in furnishing it, was one of the surest modes of prompting children to the vigorous prosecution of

their studies. But he had found in some parts of Washington county, houses like those described by the gentleman from Herkimer. They were not entirely without ventilation however, [laughter.] He had passed some seven by nine school houses, with five windows, and these so perfumed that there was no want of air, nor any danger of suffocation. He had visited schools where the wind whistled through to that degree as to make the children's hair stand up straight—and it had been a real pleasure to him, when he succeeded in getting the Trustees and inhabitants interested—no, not interested—but when he could induce them to visit the school with him. He had been delighted to see how uneasy they sat on the benches (without backs) for little children—so far elevated as not to permit them to bring their feet within seven inches of the floor, suspended as it were between heaven and earth, and not in a fit frame of mind for either. He was delighted, because it was apt to excite a pride to put the school house in a habitable condition. This was, however, the condition of most school houses; and he felt that the subject was very important, and worth attending to as part of any project for the elevation of common schools. He trusted the Convention would act on this subject, and if possible, awaken public attention to it.

Mr. PATCHIN, of Livingston, spoke in high terms of the school at Genesee; but he said he had seen a school in his county, where wind enough got in at one end to blow off the opposite side. [Laughter.] In that school there were some seventy scholars. In another, where there were some ninety scholars, under the tuition of a lady receiving twenty dollars a month, he had the honor and pleasure of killing a rat with a shovel. [Laughter.] They had some school houses also in Livingston county, which were trespassers on the highway. He found also a great want of out buildings. There was also great complaint growing out of the fact that the children went to the neighbors to get water, not in a pail (for that would not be objected to,) but in squads and singly, and for the reason that there was no pail or cup in the school, or belonging to it. He found also a want of play grounds, and he moved to amend the report by adding, "and no means for physical sports."

Mr. ROCHESTER, of Monroe, said that he had found, where he had had leisure to test the experiment, that these deficiencies were not the result of a want of liberality on the part of the people, so much as ignorance of what was necessary, and want of effort in calling attention to the subject. Instances were numerous where a little pains to inform the people of the condition of their schools, had not failed to result in the repair of the school house or the building of a new one. He had never met with any opposition to doing what was necessary for the comfort of the children, when attention was called to it in a proper way. Mr. R. illustrated this position by citing several instances in his own county, where, in apparently hopeless cases, he had succeeded by merely calling attention to the subject, and appealing to local pride, in bringing about most important changes in the condition of school houses. He assured the convention that if they would call together the people of a district, and place fairly before them any defects of this character, they would find them disposed to co-operate in any effort to improve the school houses. As to the condition of school houses, the convention, he apprehended, needed no further details on that subject. The condition of them was pretty generally the same throughout the state, and that had only to be brought home to the knowledge of the people, to lead sooner or later to improvement.

Mr. MOXON, of Allegany, said many of the school houses in his county were in the condition which had been described by others—seven by nines too—with hundreds of holes in the ceiling and windows. The public money, when applied to the support of such schools, was thrown away; and he suggested that it was the duty of superintendents, in such cases, to report them to the State Superintendent, to the end that the public money might be withheld, until improvements were made.

The resolution reported by Mr. HENRY, was now adopted.

#### SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.

Mr. DOUGLASS, of Clinton, from the committee on school discipline, reported as follows:

Your committee deem the subject matter of their report to be of vital importance to the interests of common school education. The most approved selection of text books may be in use, the best classification established, and scholars of the highest promise submitted to the training of the most intellectual teachers; but without salutary discipline, the great object in view remains unaccomplished. Therefore

Resolved, That a teacher who can govern himself may discipline a school without resorting to corporal punishment; and that an individual who cannot govern himself is unqualified for the sacred office of a teacher of youth.

Mr. DOUGLASS said that in visiting the schools in his county, he had found many instances of barbarous treatment of scholars by rash and ill judging men, and greater dissatisfaction growing out of this one cause, than all others put together. He did not blame the teachers so much as he did the trustees, in employing men so utterly destitute of judgment as to resort to such means. He need scarcely say that he was opposed entirely to corporal punishment, in any degree or manner, in schools. He believed it to be unnecessary; and as stated in the report, he held that a man who could not govern without, was not fit to teach school at all. He believed that corporal punishment should be restricted to the brute creation, and perhaps little of it was necessary in that case, for it was well known that with domestic animals, the less the punishment, the better the disposition. If this was so in regard to the brute creation, who were devoid of reason, it was but just to man's nature to conclude that milder means should be used with scholars at school. He had been exceedingly grieved in cases of scholars having apparently mild and pleasant dispositions, and without a feeling of willfulness, to see the recklessness of teachers in regard to punishment. He believed it was barbarous, and that a teacher who said he could not govern a school without corporal punishment, should not have a license or certificate of qualifications. He thought it the duty of this convention to take these men in hand, and give such an expression as that embodied in this resolution. He believed it was time something was done. He knew from experience that it was so. The first winter he taught school, being ambitious to have a well regulated school, he used the rod not a little. He had



a disorderly school, and thought he was obliged to use it. He did maintain pretty good authority, though several left the school. He was led subsequently to reflect on the subject, and thought the next winter he would try and dispense with it. The next winter he had as difficult a school as ever came under the care of a teacher; and he succeeded, without a single blow or a single threat, in going through with satisfaction to himself and his employers. For six or eight years after, he never resorted to it at all; and he might be permitted to say that he had the reputation of maintaining good order in his school. He believed it to be totally unnecessary.

Mr. FITTS, of Niagara, inquired what was meant precisely by the term corporal punishment?

Mr. DOUGLASS replied, the infliction of bodily torture.

Mr. FITTS rejoined that there were many kinds of corporal punishment besides the infliction of blows, though this was the usual acceptation of the phrase.

Mr. HENRY, of Herkimer, said he knew the current was against corporal punishment, but there were difficulties in the way of its entire abandonment, so long as our schools were composed of children who at home were not subjected to a wholesome family discipline. If they could be regulated by an exhibition of kindness, it would be better, he admitted. But he met, in the course of his experience, frequent instances of unfortunate children who had never been subjected to discipline in any form, and who could not be brought into order in any other way than by corporal punishment. He once taught a school in which there were lads who had been fishing voyages, and had made great proficiency in the school of the fishing smack; and he soon found that he could have no order until he had fishing smack discipline—in other words, the rope's end, in the school house, as well as on board the vessel. He did not know but these boys had good dispositions enough had they been developed; but there were hundreds of such cases where they had not been, if the disposition was there. But if the gentleman could make his principle operative, he would gladly assent to his reasoning. But there was high authority for the proper administration of the rod. No man who had read Solomon's writings, would be inclined to characterize his views as superficial or barbarous. Nevertheless, he laid it down as a safe maxim that the rod was to be applied, and not withheld for the child's crying. There might be extreme cases, and the maxim all barbarism and nonsense; but he believed there were many cases which were entirely unmanageable without the application of it.

Mr. FISCH, of Steuben, said he had taught several years, and he was sensible that the government of a school was an important matter. The ability of an applicant for a teacher's certificate, to govern a school, should be ascertained as far as possible. But it was a very difficult matter to come at. It might be, however, by judicious inquiries. He thought there were cases where it was necessary to inflict corporal punishment; otherwise some scholars must be excluded from school; and he thought it better that wholesome chastisement should be inflicted, than that a child should be excluded, and deprived of the opportunity to learn. He believed the teacher should exercise a moral government—that he should appeal to the reason and affections of the scholar, so far as it could be done. But there were children in whom the moral faculties were so feebly developed, that you could not get hold of them. He had had cases where there seemed to be an innate perverseness, a radical depravity in their nature, and obtuseness of the moral sentiment that defied the force of all appeals save that of the rod. He had been desirous of dispensing with it. He had dwelt on the subject considerably, and in the latter years of his teaching he had inflicted very little corporal punishment. He thought in all cases the teacher should exhaust all other means before he resorted to it. It degraded the scholar in his own estimation; and there were those that it would so humble and break down, as to destroy the very spirit that should be cherished. Another thing connected with the discipline of a school, he desired to call attention to, as a great mistake. He alluded to the habit of scolding, with some teachers—of making many threats of punishment, but never inflicting it. A scholar should be taught to obey the first command. He had never found a teacher—and he had been eight years an inspector for Bath, with twenty-seven schools—that ever had any government, if in the habit of scolding. And he had observed in families that it held true there also. The teacher should possess himself. He should know how to illustrate this in his own character and deportment. This was the most effectual way of teaching and governing.

Mr. EMERSON, of Mass., said he had had various and long experience in teaching, and he had come to the conclusion that the rod ought almost never to be used, yet that the power of using it should always be in the hands of the teacher. There were bad boys in every community, who, if they understood that the teacher had no power to punish them, would avail themselves of that exemption, and behave very ill. Whereas if they knew that he had the power, and would use it in cases of extremity, they would take care to please him. He believed in the omnipotent power of kindness. There was nothing else in human hands, that was absolutely omnipotent. He was confirmed in this belief by experience. He commenced with the flogging system. He found that it only hardened boys, and what was equally to be deprecated, he found that it hardened himself. And he experienced the feeling which he imagined was that of the fell spirit, sometimes when he had flogged a boy beyond his intention, for in the very act, one got a feeling that was almost diabolical. He maintained that corporal punishment should never be inflicted except in extreme cases. He would have the teacher have the power, but never use it. He should say without hesitation, if a teacher was obliged often to have recourse to it, that it was because he did not perfectly understand his business. We might learn the power of kindness from two extreme cases. It had always been maintained, until recently, that insane persons could be reduced to submission only by extreme and severe measures—by confinement, straight jackets, blows, &c. Now, it was found that kindness, gentleness, had an unbounded influence over them. A person who always approached them in this way, might gradually come to have undefined power over them. In thousands of instances where cruelty and severity merely exasperated to madness, kindness,

has put an end to it. Another class of cases in point, might be found in the prisons. The law of kindness had introduced a totally different state of things within the prison walls. But a few years since, it was supposed necessary to use extreme severity in the punishment of criminals. In prisons filled with the lowest of the human race, where resort was had to extreme punishment, the feelings of the prisoners were continually exasperated; there was no room for any sentiments akin to reformation in the hearts of men thus driven to desperation by the rod or the cat. But now, where the best feelings in the nature of the prisoner were appealed to constantly, where they were shown that there were those who felt an interest in them, who would treat them kindly, and desired to do them good; experience had proved that there was no surer way to subdue and control the most obdurate. This law of kindness had wrought great miracles in prisons, as it had in the hospitals for the insane. And now, in all the best managed prisons, and in all tolerably managed asylums for the insane, corporal punishment was done away with. Were we to treat children, at that age, when the feelings were beginning to be developed, with harsher measures than those which had been found effectual with those abandoned men, who had placed themselves beyond the pale of humanity by crime? Might we not expect everything from kindness to children? If we began young enough with children, we could always get along well, without the use of the rod at all. He was not sure but a child in a family might require to feel the rod, in order to make him understand that there was authority that must be submitted to. He held that authority must be maintained in schools. The teacher had the right to have it understood that he must be obeyed. If he could not be obeyed without extreme means, he must resort to it. Still, if he understood his work, he would never be obliged to resort to it. What was the great object of government in schools? Not merely to keep order, but to elevate the beings subject to our authority—to build up again a structure of noble and excellent quality, and to repress the instincts that belong to the brute or animal nature. Did not an appeal to corporal punishment always excite resistance? Was it not the natural effect of severity or cruelty to produce a feeling of that kind? A single point in regard to what he thought the doctrine of corporal punishment, was important. And that was in the government of schools by females. He had known schools, filled with boys who had shown the most rebellious spirit under the government of a man who used the rod, who, as soon as they were turned over to an intelligent, refined and gentle female, had given up and submitted willingly to the law of kindness, when they had always rebelled against the law of force. The rod should be given to the teacher, but he should be enjoined never to use it, but in cases of extremity. The use of it was evidence that the teacher did not understand his work. The only irresistible force was an appeal to the better part of a child's nature. The law of kindness was irresistible, and the only thing that was.

Dr. GRISCOM, of New-Jersey, being called out, remarked that this was one of the most interesting points in this whole subject; and lay as deeply at the foundation of success in teaching as any of them. He regretted the lateness of the hour, and if practicable to resume the subject to-morrow, it had better be done, that we might have the views of gentlemen now absent. It was a subject that interested his feelings exceedingly; not because he had taught for forty years, (for it had been the business of his life,) but because he thought the discipline and government of schools, one of the first points in the improvement of education. He agreed fully in the general views expressed by others. He confessed he was very much surprised to hear the opinions and experience of the gentlemen who introduced the resolution. He had been a teacher, it seemed, for several years, and although he used the rod at first, yet that he was so successful afterwards, under a milder government, that he continued to teach five or six years, without once striking a blow. If that gentleman could have time to detail the means he employed in thus governing his school, he would do a great service to the cause of education. He must have resorted to means to gain the empire over the minds and morals of children, not understood or known, and very rarely practiced. He should like to know what those means were—whether it was by detention of the school, by severe exercises of mind or body, by consultations with parents, or whether he had some secret not generally understood. He fully agreed with his friend from Boston, (Mr. EMERSON,) that if a teacher could command his own feelings, he could control his school with less difficulty by these mild means, than by the rod. But to let it be known that there was to be no corporal punishment; that the teacher was not to have authority to use it, we should only increase the difficulty. It should be known that the teacher had authority to use it in extreme cases, and only as a dernier resort. He had succeeded without inflicting any punishment. But there had been cases where he found it not only the shortest mode, a great saving of time to teacher and pupil, but the best mode to subdue an obstinate and perverse disposition. And was there any man who did not know some person in whom the moral faculty was so blunted; the appreciation of kindness so feeble, that you might confine them for hours without effect—but who, nevertheless, might have their perceptions so stimulated by a single blow, as to enable them to listen to a single argument? Dr. G. related several anecdotes, the incidents of which had come within his own observations, or which he had from others, illustrative of this position; that the infliction of corporal punishment, in some cases, was absolutely indispensable, and had been attended with the best results. He concluded by saying, that he believed the law of kindness should be put in requisition as much as possible, but that the teacher should have the power of corporal punishment in reserve, as the ultima ratio—and if he could act in such cases in concert with the parents, it should be done.

Mr. SHUMWAY, of Essex, said he knew a teacher who succeeded in maintaining good order until towards the close of his term; when a vicious fellow undertook to trifle with him, and see how far he could go and escape punishment. The teacher saw fit to chastise him, and it was thought he was very severe. An action of assault and battery was commenced against the teacher by the friends of the boy, and he was mulcted in damages. Previous to this there had been no difficulty in the school. The following year, a gentleman

from a neighboring village took charge of the school. The idea had gone abroad, that the teacher had no power to punish. Before the teacher had gone through three weeks, the boys commenced blowing peas through quills; next they threw inkstands at him; and finally dragged him out of school by the collar, merely out of rourery. This was because the boys had got the idea from the prosecution of the former teacher, that the power was entirely with them, and that they could do as they pleased. Another case he would mention, where such a thing had occurred two years before. A teacher of high attainments and excellent moral qualities, went into the school. He commenced on the other principle, that of approaching his scholars as men rather than boys. He succeeded admirably in bringing to order one of the most disorderly schools in the county. This was within three miles of the other school. He thought that while the power to punish should be retained, it should be very seldom used, and then with great caution. The rod was very often merely used as an apology to vent the spleen of an irritable temperament. He thought, therefore, the resolution should be qualified, so as to except extreme cases.

It being past eleven at night, without taking any question, the Convention adjourned to meet again at the Court House, to-morrow morning at half past eight o'clock.

Thursday, May 6th, 8 1-2 o'clock, A. M.

#### ACADEMIES AND SCHOOLS.

Mr. DWIGHT called up the resolution in relation to academies—saying that he thought it had been misapprehended. The resolution having been read,

Mr. EMERSON of Mass., remarked that there was a place which the academies should hold, but that there was danger of their encroaching on ground that did not belong to them. If, as in Massachusetts, the academies were brought into competition, as it were with the schools, the influences of the academies had been found to be altogether bad. And because they drew from the common schools the children of those whose influence was every thing to them, and thus assigned them a lower grade comparatively, than perhaps they actually held. This was a most deplorable effect, and should be guarded against. If, on the other hand, the academies were kept within their legitimate sphere—if they admitted only those who had gone through the common schools successfully—then the effect of academies would be good. The effect of one such academy in the neighborhood of a common school, would be to elevate the standard of education in the school. Mr. E. urged, at some length the necessity of a proper gradation of studies, for schools, academies and colleges, so that the three should form distinct parts of the same system, each exercising its appropriate functions.

Mr. TOOKER of Orange, was willing to waive the discussion of this subject now, if it were to come up again. There being some diversity of opinion here, he trusted before the convention adjourned, its views of this question would be distinctly and clearly expressed. As to the remark made yesterday, by way of objection to academies for the preparation of teachers—that the elementary branches were not taught there, for the reason that they aimed at a higher mark—he had this to say that it was in direct conflict with the remarks that have just fallen from the gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. EMERSON) whose positions were almost law. But whatever might be the course of instruction in academies in other parts of the state, the remark did not apply to those in his section of the state. These scholars were taken from the district schools provided they were of a certain age, and qualified to enter on the higher studies taught in the academies. So with the colleges. They admitted students on certain qualifications; and the academies were in fact the connecting link between them and the common schools. We desired to affiliate the three institutions; but it was difficult to say where one should begin and the other end, and much more impracticable to carry it out.

Mr. EMERSON replied that he entirely concurred with the gentleman in the remark that it was no consequence what the preparation had been for an entrance on higher studies in academies and colleges, provided the commencement of a new course was a thorough review of the previous course. He merely designed to suggest that the great object was the elevation of district schools, and that academies often had a bad effect, by withdrawing patronage from the schools.

Mr. HENRY of Herkimer, regarded the question as one of great moment. There was a rivalry between academies and schools, which, so long as it existed, would be unfavorable to both. He fully concurred with the gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. EMERSON) on this subject. High authority might be cited in support of these views. It would be found that the plan suggested by Mr. E. was almost verbatim that presented by Thomas Jefferson thirty years ago. That great apostle of education and liberty, presented a system of education which, passing from the primary school, in regular gradation through the higher seminaries, ended with the university. In this way he aimed to secure a sort of rivalry between institutions of the same grade, and a proper distribution of effort; and did succeed in producing great results. But this rivalry between institutions of different grade, with us, was imaginary. The three institutions were parts of one great system; in theory, and essentially in practice; and should act in harmony—though he was free to say that its operation would be more so if each could be restricted to appropriate functions.

President HAMMOND remarked here, that although competition should be kept up between the different institutions, the system should be so ordered, that there should be no petty jealousies among them. There might be a competition between colleges; but there should be none between colleges and academies; a competition between academies, but none between them and the common schools. In this way, the institutions of the same grade might have a very beneficial operation on each other. He highly approved the sentiment embodied in the resolution, in that point of view, as discouraging competition between academies and schools.

Mr. WING, of Warren, regarded it as important that some such expression as this should go out from this convention, and perhaps the sentiment could not be more happily conveyed than it was in the resolution. There had been imaginary rivalry between academies and schools. Such an expression as this would do more than any thing else to do away any such apprehension. As to the remark that academies had a tendency to draw away valuable support from schools—if he might be permitted to refer to his own county—he would say that they had but one academy in Warren, and that, even in the village where it was, had not had the effect spoken of but to a moderate extent. The schools were full enough, the academy taking only such as it should take. There was an apprehension, however, that this concentrated common school effort might prejudice the academies. But he believed it to be imaginary. The resolution would at all events satisfy those entertaining such views, that so far from there being any hostility to academies here, the sentiment of the convention was the reverse—that we regard the schools as dependent on the academies for teachers, while the latter must look for scholars worthy of their highest honors, to the schools.

Prof. POTTER here rose to move an amendment to the resolution, by which, he said, the object would be more effectually



attained. In the spirit of the resolution he cordially concurred—regarding it as designed to promote good feeling and co-operation between all institutions for education. All were necessary parts of one great system. No one of them could be dispensed with. But there was nevertheless a natural jealousy between these different institutions of learning. In Massachusetts, very recently, an application to rebuild a college was rejected on the express ground that all the patronage of the state should go to schools. That was the result of prejudice against higher institutions; and there was the like jealousy on the part of some of the friends of the colleges, of common schools and academies. This prejudice should be done away, and the public led to appreciate the importance of co-operation, in a catholic spirit, for the improvement of all these parts of the great system of education.

Prof. POTTER concluded by moving a modification of the resolution, which was agreed to, and the resolution, as amended, was adopted.

Mr. BARLOW of Madison, called up the second resolution reported by the committee on resolutions, and moved a substitute, which after a slight modification, made at the suggestion of Prof. POTTER, was adopted, as follows:—

**Resolved,** That the cause of education is the cause of free institutions, and has claims upon every true American patriot and statesman for support—that it is essential to the prosperity of our people, the popularity of our national policy and the promotion of popular virtue.

#### INSPECTION OF TEACHERS.

Mr. WOODS of Columbia, from the committee on the inspection of teachers, submitted a report which was read and laid on the table for the present, as follows:—

**Resolved,** That in the opinion of your committee, the examining and licensing of teachers is a duty of the highest responsibility, and upon its judicious performance depends in a good degree the success of the common school system.

**Resolved,** That great wisdom and judgment are required not only to prevent dissatisfaction in the rejection of the unqualified, but to secure the services of such only as are morally and mentally qualified in an eminent measure.

**Resolved,** That no Deputy Superintendent should give a certificate for temporary or partial purposes, as it must retard the advancement of the schools, while it is unjust and injurious to the deserving and well qualified teacher.

#### DISTRICT SCHOOL JOURNAL.

Mr. BOWEN of Cayuga, from the committee on that subject, reported the following which was adopted:—

**Resolved,** That we have entire confidence in the District School Journal, and believe its general circulation will greatly increase the efficiency of the system, by awakening that interest and diffusing that information which are essential to the improvement of the schools.

**Resolved,** That we will use all possible efforts to induce the friends of education, throughout the state, to aid in extending its circulation.

#### SCHOOL CONVENTIONS, &c.

Mr. W. WADSWORTH of Washington, from the committee on this subject, submitted the following which was adopted:—

**Resolved,** That the President of this Convention be requested to confer with the Superintendent of Common Schools of this state, and with his advice, fix the time and place for holding the next meeting of this convention.

**Resolved,** That measures be immediately taken by the Deputy Superintendent of each county, to call County Conventions of the friends of education—and to form town associations for the improvement and elevation of the character of our common schools—and that they be requested to exert their influence to induce the schools to hold frequent celebrations—as measures well calculated to correct the evils—promote the interests—and elevate the standard of primary education.

Mr. ROCHESTER submitted a resolution, invoking the co-operation of the clergy of all denominations, in elevating the condition of common schools—which under the rule was referred to the business committee.

#### NORMAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. BARLOW called up the resolution on the subject of normal schools, and moved the following as a substitute:—

**Resolved,** That the attention of the Superintendent be respectfully requested to the question whether the establishment of normal schools will be beneficial to the cause of popular education.

Prof. POTTER addressed the convention on the subject. He did not rise to oppose normal schools. He was their friend, and was in favor of the resolution as now offered. The only difference between him and others, was in regard to the radical principle on which normal schools were to be advocated. They would make a special training indispensable. He admitted that to teach—to form minds, required higher qualifications than to make hats or shoes—and he went further. It required higher qualifications than a teacher would gain in a normal school. The best qualification for a good teacher was the qualification for good citizens. What did we want? That a man should sit down like a shoe maker, and cut and make shoes like his master before him? Were we to manufacture minds in that way? No sir, ours was the Yankee mode of doing things—"Give me your best method, and I will give you a better one." He believed the highest office of these schools would be the quickening influence they would produce on other minds, that would never go into these schools, but which were capable of perfecting and carrying out the principle. Yesterday we were told, (and a great truth it was,) that the science of teaching was yet in the rubbish of discovery. And would gentlemen tell him that he must send a young man to a school to be taught the only way in which he could teach reading—when the only way in which reading can be taught, had not yet been discovered? He wanted to see no man come forward with the idea that he only knew the way to teach, but with the broad catholic spirit of a learner, of one intending to learn by experience. And the effect of the normal schools of Massachusetts was to infuse that spirit. New methods of teaching would be made known experimentally and more impressively through schools for training than in any other way. But he was not anxious to see them established to the exclusion of other means of training teachers. He would not have it assumed that this was the only way. He would rather send a man to another institution to learn all these things, than to send him to a model school to be taught how to teach. What we wanted was training in ordinary schools, where minds of different classes and dispositions were brought into collision. When we wanted specific training for specific purposes, then it would be very well to send to a training school for that purpose. But if, from the time a boy was intended for a teacher—if from the time when he begins to learn, you only placed him in a normal school, he would get there his entire education. Never having associated with any except those designated for teachers, you would send him out only fit to be teacher, to stereotype minds, to repeat what he had heard, but with none of that spirit which suits the free air and free land in which we lived.

A man might be a great man, like Newton, and yet unfit to teach, whatever might be his training. But we could find men that had this great instinctive tact, the want of which no train-

ing could supply. Men trained in a normal school for teaching, and nothing else, would be fit for nothing else. Prof. Potter regarded what was termed unsystematic training as valuable, inasmuch as it tended to develop the various faculties, and to enable our people to adapt themselves to every emergency. Why was it that the Yankee soldier fought better than the English? It was because the latter were taught in normal schools, where every motion was made with mathematical precision. An Englishman would fight well from the right place; whereas a Yankee could fight from any place—from before or behind a stone fence—from the top of a hill or the bottom—no matter where. The complaint made against Napoleon by the old generals of Europe, was that he would not fight according to rule, and they made this a ground of sore complaint too. Prof. P. wanted young Napoleons in our common schools. He did not care about their fighting by rule, if they only gained the victory [laughter]—if they only touched and waked up those spontaneous energies that every human being carried in his own soul—if they but taught man that his highest responsibility was to make himself, and that he could educate himself up to the standard of any requirement. God forbid that in this free land, any system should gain a foothold which was to scoop out channels of education, through which alone the self-sustaining capabilities of our people might find access to it.

Mr. MANN, of Massachusetts, being repeatedly called for by the convention, said the gentleman who had just taken his seat, after having so eloquently addressed the convention, reminded him of an anecdote of Gen. Hamilton. He attended, one evening, where some juggler had collected a large audience. The astute general placed himself on a seat near where the juggler was to exhibit. By some means the juggler had got a notion that here was a sharp-sighted man who might detect his arts. Before he began his operations for the evening, he took a piece of money and put it into the hand of the general, requesting him to keep it until the evening should close. The general, supposing it to be part of the trick to get the money out of his hand, held it tight in his palms, and in that way his attention was diverted from the tricks of the juggler. In that way (said Mr. M.) the gentleman has drawn your attention from the merits of the case. [Laughter.] If normal schools were such necessarily as the gentleman had described them to be, Mr. M. certainly would cordially assent to every word he had uttered. He did not think that school teachers were to be coined as they turned out half-dollars at Philadelphia, every one bearing the same image and superscription. Nobody thought so. The grand object of normal schools was to wake up the intelligence of individuals—not to stereotype minds, but to exhibit what was known, and to put minds on the alert to find out other and better modes of teaching—to make the art of one discoverer common to all—to diffuse, to generalize the attainments of every individual—and thus ultimately to make as perfect a system as could be made, adapted to every variety of disposition and temperament ordinarily found. Now the reverse of this was the ordinary practice. With the uniformity of Dr. Sangrado's lancet prescriptions, one and the same course of treatment was applied to all cases. He was aware that we were yet in the infancy of this science of teaching—that we had scarcely learned the alphabet. But we had learned something; and our true course was to take the next step before us which we knew to be an improvement, and let the future take care of itself. As it was, he was satisfied that progress in acquisition might be accelerated four fold in our schools, that more knowledge, better habits of mind, more power of application, might be acquired under this improved method of instruction than in the old way.

Mr. GAZZARD, of Connecticut, begged leave to say that on such a subject as this, when the question was between normal schools and academies, we were apt to have our peculiar views, and not to see the defects of our favorite plan, or the disadvantages of its antagonist system. He thought there were difficulties in both. The true course was to resort to practical results; and to this end he would give both the normal schools and the academies a fair trial. The two systems need not conflict.

Prof. POTTER merely rose to correct a misapprehension. He was not opposed to normal schools. He understood the resolution offered yesterday as insisting on the exclusive utility of normal schools. He understood the remarks of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MANN), as having the same bearing. Against that idea he protested. As part and parcel of the present system, normal schools were important—almost indispensable. He ventured to say that we must have a normal school at Albany, where it would be accessible to persons from all parts of the state, and diffuse the benefit of its example generally. But it should not require a long training, but should be made to operate on a great many minds.

Prof. WESTER, of Geneva, was of opinion that we might improve the means we now had for the preparation of teachers, in the academies, by one or more normal schools. But he was disposed to try still further the existing system, rather than to abandon it entirely for a new one. One such school, at a central point was perhaps as much as should be undertaken at present.

The question was here taken on the resolution, and after being amended on motion of Mr. DWIGHT, so as to suggest the establishment of one normal school, adopted.

#### CO-OPERATION OF THE PROFESSIONS.

Mr. ROCHESTER introduced with some brief remarks, the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:—

**Resolved,** That identified as the cause of education is with the advancement of individual and social welfare, it has peculiar claims upon the clergy of all denominations, and that it is the settled conviction of this convention, that the common schools greatly need their personal attention and patronage.

**Resolved,** That this convention cordially invite their co-operation in promoting the improvement and efficiency of common schools, and they would respectfully suggest the propriety of their recommending this object to the favorable and earnest consideration of the people of their charge.

**Resolved,** That the members of the legal profession having the best opportunities of observing the deplorable effects of the neglect of education, in the increase of crime, pauperism, and other social evils, might exert a most powerful and benign influence in awakening deeper and more general interest in the subject of common schools, and that their good offices in this respect are earnestly invoked by the members of this convention.

**Resolved,** That the physicians of this state are constantly called to lament the effects of ignorance on the physical as well as the moral condition of men and that they could render the most essential aid to the efforts now making to improve our schools, and that their countenance and encouragement in these efforts is respectfully invited by the convention.

Mr. KING, of Kings, offered the following, which was unanimously adopted:

**Resolved,** That the thanks of this convention be respectfully presented to the Hon. SAMUEL YOUNG, our respected Superintendent, for his cordial and effective co-operation in rendering our action useful to the great cause of general education.

**Resolved,** That a copy of his eloquent and admirable address be respectfully requested for publication.

#### MR. MANN'S ADDRESS.

Mr. BARLOW, of Onondaga, offered the following, which was unanimously adopted:—

**Resolved,** That the thanks of this convention be presented to the Hon. HONORABLE MANN, Secretary of the Board of Education of the state of Massachusetts, for his admirable and excellent address; and that a copy be respectfully requested for publication.

Mr. POPE, of Oneida, offered the following, which was unanimously adopted:—

**Resolved,** That a general circulation of Mr. MacLay's able report to the last assembly, on the petitions for a repeal of the law establishing the office of Deputy Superintendent, will go far towards disabbing any portion of the public mind, which may have been misled as to the objects and tendency of that law; and therefore,

**Resolved,** That the deputies are requested to solicit the proprietors of newspapers in their respective counties, to give the report in question, an early publication in their several prints.

The convention here took a recess until 3 o'clock P. M.

Thursday, 2 o'clock P. M.

#### TEXT BOOKS.

Mr. ROCHESTER, of Monroe, brought in the report of the committee on this subject, as follows:—

Your committee have come to the conclusion that it is impracticable, if not inexpedient, for this convention to recommend a list of books for the use of the schools—it would require more time to canvass the merits of the various books claiming our consideration, than can well or properly be devoted to the subject at this time.

A plan for securing uniformity, irrespective of the particular books which shall constitute that uniformity, is, in the view of your committee, the more pressing and important branch of the subject. An uniform list for the entire state, your committee believe, would operate unjustly and disastrously to a large number of authors, publishers and vendors of such books as might be excluded from the list, and array an opposition to the execution of the plan which could not be successfully withstood. A catalogue of approved school books as a guide for the deputies of the several counties, would unquestionably serve a valuable purpose: the preparation of such a catalogue most properly belongs to, and is therefore very respectfully suggested for the consideration of our Superintendent. The only feasible plan which your committee deem it expedient at this time to adopt, is one that shall be directed to securing uniformity in the several districts; this may eventually be followed up by introducing the same books in the respective towns or counties. The method which your committee recommend to effect this measure, is as follows:—

Let the deputies of the several counties convene as many of the inhabitants of the several districts as may be possible, and recommend the appointment of a committee to consist of the trustees, to prepare a list of suitable text books. Let the meeting, on full consideration, decide on the same and resolve that the list adopted by it shall remain unchanged for three years, without the assent of the Deputy Superintendent. After that time it may be advisable to revise the list, and to adopt any improvements that may in the meantime have been made in the character of the books. The list should be recorded in the school register together with the resolves of the meeting in regard to it; and also conspicuously placed upon the walls of the school house, that a full knowledge of the books adopted may be thus daily present to the pupils. It should be made the law of the school. In some cases it is hoped the deputies may be able to assemble the inhabitants of a town, or even delegates from the several towns of the county and thus introduce the same books throughout many different districts. It is not supposed by your committee that this plan will in all cases be immediately conformed to, but they have no doubt that by the gradual disappearance of the old books and the introduction in their stead of the School List books, uniformity will, without imposing any additional expense, be gradually secured, and this most vexatious evil of the schools entirely removed.

H. E. ROCHESTER, Chairman.

The report having been read, Mr. ROCHESTER remarked that the plan proposed by the committee, was the plan on which he had acted, and with entire success, and he had no doubt it might be generally adopted with the same success.

Mr. CLEMENT, of Dutchess, expressed a desire to hear the views of the State Superintendent on this subject, and

Col. YOUNG came forward, saying that he was not sufficiently acquainted with the text books now in use, to decide between them—nor did he suppose that deputies would be able to designate any particular books as most meritorious. It had occurred to him that a system of exchanges might be arranged between districts in such a way as to produce uniformity in text books, without incurring the expense of new books. He thought, however, the plan proposed by the committee, was not on the whole objectionable. He liked that part of it which contemplated calling the people together and the choice by them of their own committee. But after all, it would take time to test the merits of books as well as men, till both would ultimately find their level.

Mr. MORTON expressed his gratification to hear these opinions of the State Superintendent, and his belief that such a plan fully carried out, would in the end result in bringing about this much desired object—a uniformity of text books not only in districts, but in counties, and ultimately throughout the state.

Mr. HENRY concurred fully in the report—at the same time expressing the opinion that there was the best set of books, and that deputies should have an eye to this subject, and as fast as good books could be introduced, introduce them.

Mr. BARLOW said it was conceded on all hands that we could not so systematize the whole state, as to have the same books everywhere—that the people would not lay aside the books now in use and buy others—and hence the importance of interchanging information as to the plan which would be most acceptable to produce the desired uniformity in text books.

Mr. WISE objected to the details of the plan—particularly to that part of it which contemplated superseding the trustees of districts and substituting a committee, and

Mr. ROCHESTER consented to modify the report so as to meet this objection.

Mr. KAYES preferred to leave the matter to the superintendents. He thought it formed one of their prominent duties to effect if possible a uniformity of books.

Mr. WADSWORTH, of Yates, had acted under that view of his duty, and for the purpose of effecting uniformity throughout the county. With the exception of two towns, his suggestions had been partially or fully acted on; and he believed it practicable to effect speedily a uniformity in counties as well as districts.

Mr. NAY, of Genesee, said he had not recommended any books, acting in this respect in accordance with the suggestions of the department at Albany. He had found, however, a great variety of books in his county. It was a subject of much complaint, and he could tell the convention that if it should think proper to recommend any particular series of books, it would be received and cordially embraced there. As to the suggestions in the report, he thought it left the matter precisely where it was now.

Mr. FRENCH suggested that the objection to leaving the whole matter to the superintendents, was that the office was not permanent, and that a new superintendent might undo every thing his predecessor had done. He thought it better to leave the



matter to the districts at their regular annual meetings. As to the particular books that should be recommended, if any, his own opinion was that this was a matter of little consequence. A teacher who understood his business could teach the elementary studies with any of the books now in use.

Col. Young explained. In saying that it was desirable to have uniformity in text books, he did not mean uniformity throughout the state—for that would be premature, so long as it was undetermined what books were the best of the whole. He meant uniformity in the same school. He did not believe parents who had bought books would throw them away. His suggestions had reference to the best way of using the books they had. Now if the books in use were about of a grade, it would not be difficult to get lists of the different books used in several schools, and the number of varieties of each; and if exchanges could be effected so as to have each school furnished with uniform books, an opportunity would be afforded of testing the relative merits of each variety of book on the same subject, and ultimately to bring about a more general uniformity.

Mr. Mann stated that in Massachusetts, there were committees authorized and required by law to prescribe books. Lists of these books were printed and sent out, and the booksellers supplying themselves with these books, those who bought were more apt to buy these than others. In this way the books specified were gradually working their way into the schools.

Prof. Porter here offered the following resolutions, which (with the report) were adopted, as follows:

*Resolved*, That the unanimous sense of the members of this Convention, that the great diversity of text books now in use form some of the most serious obstacles in the way of the efficient improvement of common schools; an obstacle which, unless removed, must materially contribute to neutralize the influence of all other efforts to secure such improvement.

*And Whereas*, That though the ultimate and entire removal of this evil must be the act of the people, it is believed that it may be greatly facilitated by the trustees and teachers of the several school districts, the inspectors and commissioners of the common schools in the several towns, if they would co-operate earnestly and cordially with the deputy superintendents in this matter; therefore

*Resolved*, That such co-operation be particularly and respectfully invited.

*Resolved*, That it ought to be a constant object with each deputy superintendent to bring about uniformity within each district, town or county, as soon as it can be possibly effected, consistently with the rights and feelings of parents and school officers.

*Resolved*, That each deputy superintendent ought to inform himself, as far as practicable, of the respective merits of different text books, that the convention may at some future time be prepared to recommend one or more series of books for general adoption throughout this state.

*Resolved*, That a uniformity in each district is most important—in each town is next in rank in point of importance, and that generally the attainment of uniformity in contiguous districts, towns or counties should be made a leading object of effort.

On motion of Mr. Dwight,

*Resolved*, That the plan recommended in the report of the committee on text books be adopted.

#### PROFESSIONAL CO-OPERATION.

Mr. Barlow called up Mr. Rochester's resolutions on this subject, and

Col. Young remarked that he suggested to the mover the introduction of this resolution. He thought that if any class understood the value of education, it was what was called the learned professions—that lawyers, particularly, being conversant with public affairs and the origin of crimes, and knowing the expense incurred in consequence of crime and pauperism, would be well qualified to give information to the mass of the community, touching the importance of education—that physicians, knowing that diseases were of our own creation, and the visitation of our sins against the physical and organic law, would be a class peculiarly qualified to promote through the community a disposition to elevate and diffuse that instruction which was necessary to make those that should come after us greater, wiser and better than we. If these classes would make it part of their business to give the advice so much required, the best results would follow of course. He hoped the resolution would be adopted, and he trusted, coming as the invitation would, from a convention representing all parts of this great state, it would be cordially responded to.

After some remarks from Mr. Emerson, of Massachusetts, in support of the resolutions, they were unanimously adopted.

Prof. Porter here offered the following, which, after some remarks from him, was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That this convention witness with pride and pleasure, the efforts which are making in other states to improve common schools, and to extend their benefits—that they welcome with pleasure the presence at this meeting of gentlemen from those states, long and honorably known for their enlightened devotion to this cause; that they regard it as an earnest of the frank and generous spirit which is to characterize the future efforts of the several states in behalf of education.

#### INSPECTION OF TEACHERS.

Mr. Woodin, of Columbia, called up the report on this subject, and it was adopted.

#### UNION SCHOOLS.

Mr. Burdick, of Rensselaer, from the committee on that subject, reported the following:

*Resolved*, That we earnestly recommend the establishment of Union District Schools in all the villages and populous places of our state, and would respectfully ask for this subject the consideration of the Hon. Superintendent of Common Schools.

Mr. Dwight addressed the convention at some length, in support of the resolution, earnestly urging the formation of union schools.

The debate on this subject, (with the concluding debates of the convention, which we are obliged to defer for want of room) was participated in by Mr. Barlow, Mr. Nat. Rev. Mr. Paige, Mr. Emerson, Col. Young, Mr. Mann, Mr. Finch, Mr. Rochester, Mr. Fitts, Mr. Tooker, and Mr. W. Wright, and the resolution was finally adopted, as above.

#### DISTRICT LIBRARIES.

Mr. Sprague, from the committee on this subject, reported as follows:

*Resolved*, That the practice of the inhabitants of some of the school districts, in introducing books into their libraries that are not only altogether useless, but oftentimes demoralizing in their tendency, is highly censurable, and should be discontinued by every friend of good morals throughout our entire community, and that we will, as far as in us lies, use all reasonable means to prevent the introduction and consequent circulation and use of all such deleterious books.

*Resolved*, That we do earnestly recommend to the consideration of the parents in the several districts of the state, the importance of more fully appreciating the benefits resulting from the regular and constant habit of reading the books of their libraries.

This subject was briefly debated by Mr. Rochester, Mr. Sprague, Mr. Fitts and Col. Young, and then laid aside for the present.

Adjourned to to-morrow morning.

Friday, May 6.

Mr. Randall, of Oswego, offered the following, which were adopted:

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this convention be respectfully tendered to the Mayor and Common Council of the city of Utica, for the ample and commodious arrangements provided for the accommodation of its members, and for the courteous manner in which they were offered.

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this convention be tendered to the Trustees of the First Presbyterian Church in the city of Utica, for offering to our use their spacious church during the sitting of the convention.

*Resolved*, That we tender our thanks to the authors and publishers of text books who have presented us with copies of their works, and our assurance that they shall receive from us every consideration their merits may require.

#### DUTIES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

Mr. Tooker, from the committee on this subject, reported the following, which was adopted without debate:

*Resolved*, That no one contributes more to the stability of our government, to the happiness of the social circle, and the prosperity of the citizen, than the faithful and intelligent teacher; and until the community duly appreciates the dignity of this sacred office, and liberally remunerates those who are worthy of its trust, our common schools must often fall into the hands of the unqualified, and thus endanger those religious and civil institutions they are designed to support.

*Resolved*, That upon the cordial co-operation of parents and teachers mainly depends the reformation of our schools.

#### SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.

Mr. Dwight called up the report on school discipline, and it was further debated by Mr. Douglass, Mr. Rochester, Mr. Wino, Shaw, Mr. Barlow, Mr. Emerson, Mr. Mann, Mr. Sprague, Mr. Town, Mr. Stevens, Mr. Gallaudet and Dr. Gaiscom, in the course of which the following was moved as an amendment, to come in after the word resolved:

That while we recognize in the teacher the same authority to correct his pupil as the parent has to punish his wayward child, we nevertheless believe, that a teacher who can govern himself, may discipline a school without resorting to corporal punishment; and that an individual who cannot govern himself is unqualified for the sacred office of a teacher of youth.

The whole subject was finally postponed to the next convention.

#### METHODS OF TEACHING.

Mr. Wino submitted a report on this subject, concluding with the following resolutions, which were agreed to without debate:

*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this convention, the highest success of a school must depend upon the teacher's skill in the best methods of classifying, instructing and governing his pupils.

*Resolved*, That those methods of instruction must be best, which, in the highest degree, call into exercise the powers of the intellect and the faculties of the moral nature.

*Resolved*, That that mode of organizing and classifying a school is best, which tends most to form habits of subordination, order and punctuality, and to save the time of both teacher and pupil.

*Resolved*, That skill in educating must depend upon a thorough knowledge of the subject to be taught, and a familiarity with the best methods of communicating that knowledge; and that skill in instruction must depend upon the power of adapting the knowledge to be communicated, to the capacity of the learner, and making it familiar by repetition, and by the action of his own mind.

*Resolved*, That the best mode of school government is that which pervading and becoming part of all the plans for teaching and instruction, and heedful of the wants and weaknesses of its subjects, is addressed to their reason, conscience, and affections.

#### TEACHER'S DEPARTMENT.

Mr. Patchin offered the following resolution which was adopted without debate unanimously:

*Resolved*, That we have great confidence in the different school teachers' departments established in different parts of the state, and that we look to them for able and efficient teachers for our common schools.

#### DISTRICT LIBRARIES.

Mr. Sprague called up the report on this subject, and it was laid over without further action. The resolutions were however subsequently taken up and adopted.

#### SCHOOL LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

Mr. Finch, from the committee on this subject, reported the following, which was adopted:

*Resolved*, That the instructions to deputy superintendents be submitted to our present superintendent for revision and amendment.

#### REGULAR ATTENDANCE.

Mr. Parker, from the committee on this subject, reported the following which were adopted:

*Resolved*, That regular attendance at school is highly essential to maintaining proper classification, desirable for contracting habits of punctuality, and requisite for permanent intellectual advancement.

*Resolved*, That we solicit the prompt action of parents and guardians to secure the regular attendance of children, as indispensable to their best improvement and their certain progress.

Mr. Wino offered the following, which was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That we tender our respectful and grateful thanks to GEORGE B. EMERSON, Esq. for his cordial and efficient aid in unfolding and enforcing the great principles that should pervade education.

#### STANDARD QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS.

Mr. Sprague offered the following—which after some amendment was laid on the table:

*Resolved*, That the business committee be required to report whether, in their opinion, it is expedient for this convention to pass resolutions in favor of a standard of qualifications of teachers.

President Hammond then took leave of the convention, with some appropriate and feeling remarks—when the convention took a recess.

Friday, 2 o'clock P. M.

The convention again assembled, Mr. King, Vice-President, in the chair.

Mr. Tooker offered the following, which was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That the unanimous thanks of this convention be tendered to the Hon. JAMES D. HAMMOND, the President of this convention, for the able and satisfactory manner with which he discharged the duties of that office.

Mr. Boyax, of Cayuga, from the committee on vocal music, submitted the following resolution, which was adopted:

*Resolved*, That one of the most powerful means of purifying the intellect, softening the manners and elevating the affections, is the cultivation of vocal music; that it makes the school room happier, its discipline more easy, its improvement more rapid, and that we earnestly recommend its introduction into every district school in the state.

#### FEMALE TEACHERS.

Mr. Dwight, from the committee on that subject, reported the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That we respectfully recommend to the patrons of our school districts the more general employment of competent female teachers in our winter schools.

This resolution was debated by Mr. Dwight, Mr. Barlow, Mr. Denman, Mr. Patchin, Mr. Finch, and Mr. Parker—the latter moving to postpone action on the subject to the next convention—which was done.

On motion of Mr. Rochester, a committee was appointed by the chair, consisting of Messrs. DWIGHT, RANDALL of Albany, and FORDA, to superintend the publication of the proceedings of the convention.

On motion of Mr. Tooker, ordered that the proceedings of the convention be published in the District School Journal.

On motion of Mr. Rochester, a resolution of thanks to the presiding officers and secretaries was adopted.

Mr. King thereupon simply and eloquently addressed the convention, and

The convention adjourned sine die.

The Address of the Hon. Samuel Young, before the State Convention of County Superintendents, will be published in the next number.

## To the Friends of the Journal.

This number closes the second volume of the Journal, and we trust that it has in some measure answered the expectations of those who anticipated from its establishment an increasing interest in our common schools. We would not, however, at this time, revert to the past, but rather call attention to the means of making the Journal a more efficient auxiliary to the great cause of general education.

It should be much enlarged, that, in addition to the important decisions and directions of the State Superintendent, and the valuable communications from the several County Superintendents, we may be enabled to publish a greater variety of interesting selections from foreign and American works on the different methods of teaching, and the means of awakening and increasing interest in popular instruction.

As the state appropriation will not pay, even for the district copies of the enlarged Journal, we shall suffer a large pecuniary loss unless our subscription is greatly increased. We therefore respectfully request the County Superintendents, and the friends of education generally, to aid in extending its circulation. Should but half the number be subscribed for in each county, which are circulated gratuitously by the state, the editor will not only be able to enlarge the Journal, but also to illustrate it by valuable engravings of school houses, furniture and apparatus.

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